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Facilitation of Career Success: Canadian and Finnish Eminent Women

by

Grace A. Schlosser

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Abstract

Factors to which eminent women attribute their success were explored in this research project, which consisted of both quantitative and qualitative studies. The first study involved compiling and comparing the responses of Canadian and Finnish eminent women to questions about the facilitators and barriers in their career development. The second study consisted of the narrative analysis of the life stories of contemporary eminent women from Finland.

In the first study the respondents from both countries similarly ascribed people, experiences, and conditions as contributing to their status or deterring them from their goals. The primary reasons they were able to achieve were their own personal qualities and convictions. The participants also gave considerable credit to the encouragement and support of other people in their lives, especially their spouses. Although there were similar patterns of response to the survey questions for the two samples, differences were found among the variables, some of which were statistically significant.

The participants in the second study were twelve Finnish women who have achieved success and peer recognition in various fields including science, business and finance, politics, and the arts. Four universal themes emerged from an analysis of the interview data. In their stories of achievement, the main factors were their own personal self-reliance, the superiority of their work, and their interdependence with others including family members and coworkers. In addition, every woman talked about the egalitarianism that pervades Finnish society and its importance in the home and workplace. The voices of these women confirmed and extended the knowledge base about the course of talent development for females and the meaning of success for eminent women.

Recommendations for counselling and educating gifted girls can be implied from the findings. Educators and parents must value achievement and provide strong role models. Girls need opportunities to develop feelings of self-reliance and gain competencies conducive to creating superior work. Equality must become a clear goal in our everyday lives. Nurturing relationships are an important part of a woman's experience of success. Supportive networks, in terms of other people and services, are necessary so that women can combine family and career responsibilities.

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This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Joseph, and my children, Valerie, Neil, and Trent. Their continued love and support has allowed me to pursue my dreams while remaining firmly grounded in the "real world." Inspired by women whose aspirations exceeded their achievements and whose accomplishments went unnoticed, this project was completed in the hope that our children will be encouraged, enabled, and empowered to fufill their potentials.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Traditionally, women were not the focus of studies of eminence or adult achievement. The preponderance of men in these studies predicated what are now commonly held perceptions about women and achievement. Women have been accepted as the underachievers of modern society. At the same time, some of the feminist literature has strongly rejected achievement studies and eminence studies. As a result, the underachievement of females, although well-documented and frequently attributed to socio-cultural influences, has not been thoroughly researched and is not well understood.

Each culture has a unique historical and current experience, yet women underachieve throughout the world. Eminent women are those who have positions of prominence or high achievement in their fields of endeavor. Since eminence, like other forms of achievement, is context and culture-dependent, and international surveys of achievement reveal that gender differences vary significantly across cultures, a cross-cultural comparison of highly achieving women is necessary to augment our understanding of female eminence. Study of those women in a culture who manage to distinguish themselves from their peers by their superior work, talents, or leadership skills can clarify some of the issues related to female achievement.

Facilitative factors in the career development of Canadian and Finnish eminent women are described in this study. Canada has recently improved its international rating regarding the status of women. Finland has a reputation of being one of the leading countries in the world concerning gender equality. Nearly all the recent publications from Finland report the relative prominence of women in their society with pride. The levels of participation of females in Finnish political, medical, educational, and artistic fields have exceeded those of nearly every other country in the world. The participation level of women in Canada does not match the high level in Finland.

Background to the Research

A human development report published by the United Nations (1995) indicated that women are not treated as well as men in any country in the world. Each culture practises different values, ethical norms, and religious beliefs and has unique social structures and social relations. The countries chosen for inclusion in this study provide variation as to economic, religious, traditional, and historical backgrounds. Finland is a country rated by the United Nations as providing a high level of gender equity and known for being a pioneer in the provision of suffrage for women. Canada is recognized for its standard of living, two official languages, and policies of multiculturalism.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides comparisons across most of the world's countries on measures of human development. In the 1997 publication, Canada was given the first ranking on the human development index (HDI) which is based on life expectancy, opportunities for schooling, and income. Finland ranked eighth behind Netherlands, Japan, Iceland, the USA, Norway and France. A second index, the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) uses the same variables but focuses on the inequality of women. When gender disparity was part of the human development index, Finland rose from eighth to seventh place. In the 1997 report, Canada was able for the first time to attain the first position.

Since 1995, the UNDP report has included another index, the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), which concentrates on the amount of female participation in professional, economic, and political spheres. The variables used in this new measure include the number of women involved in political decision-making, women's access to professional opportunities, and the earning power of women. In the GEM list for 1997, Finland's rank as fourth surpassed Canada's position in sixth position. The top three ranks were taken by the other Nordic countries: Norway, Sweden and Denmark. With the GEM list relative percentages of women in various positions are also published. In Canada 19.3% of the seats in Parliament were held by women compared to 33.5% in Finland. Canadian women were reported as being business administrators and managers more often, but the Finnish women comprised more of professional

and technical workers than did Canadian women. Earned shared income was reported as 38% for Canadian women and 41% for Finnish women.

The Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) conducts periodic reviews of individual member countries every three years. The member countries are Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Mexico, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In 1995 the policies and efforts of Finland were examined critically. That report stated: "Finland's efforts in integrative issues such as women in development (WID), participatory development and environment have been notably strong. Gender issues are an integral part of Finland's development co-operation policy." (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1995, p.12).

Traditionally women in Finland have taken part in most aspects of society. The official Finnish policy has been to improve the status of women. "Finland's development co-operation strategy aims at raising the status of women and increasing their opportunities to participate and influence decisions, and recognises their importance in advancing democracy and human rights, population and family planning, and economic and social development in general." "Finland's development assistance pursues the principle of equality between the genders in all development co-operation projects and strives to utilise and develop fully both female and male resources" (OECD, 1995, p. 28).

The status of women in Canada has been improving over the past years according to the United Nations indices. However, in several aspects, Canadian women are not as advanced as those in the Nordic countries. On average, Canadian women are not as highly educated as the Finnish women. They do not participate as much in the political scene and they do not have the same tradition of career experience.

Placing this Study in Perspective with the Literature

Feminist literature does not usually include studies of highly successful women. The common complaint by critics is that eminence studies emphasize the characteristics of the individual and neglect the social structure. Studies of the eminent have been seen as another tool that effectively excludes women because of the weight placed on long-term commitment and the resources necessary to assist a person in attaining such a high degree of renown. Rather than emphasizing the accomplishments of women long unrecognized, some authors see studies of high achievers as overemphasizing behaviors useful to market production (Crawford & Marecek, 1992). Recently there has been an increase in research that focuses on topics such as career success and leadership style among women; these topics are closely related to eminence research.

A resurgence of interest in the talent development and achievement of females has been demonstrated by the recent publications of American researchers in the field of gifted education. One of the gaps in the literature in the field pertains to the study of the factors that enhance or inhibit the development of exceptional abilities (Subotnik, Arnold, & Noble, 1995). Barriers to achievement in females have been studied more than contributory factors. Silverman (1995) suggests that lack of independence, education, property, employment, and support from society are such strong impediments that the question to be asked is how it is possible for any woman to attain eminence.

In an examination of the reasons for the under-representation of women in studies of eminent creators, Ochse (1991) found that women have strong needs for social intimacy that impede their drive to create. The scarcity of women artists was decried in the work of Piirto (1991), who pointed out that necessity for early achievement and continued production works against women who must reconcile their roles as females with their career demands. As these explanations demonstrate, there is considerable confusion as to whether women are limited by their own developmental needs or by restrictive factors within society. Pointing to an interaction of internal and external barriers as contributing to underachievement in women does nothing to

explicate the situation. It is my hope that study of facilitative factors for successful women using more than one nation will provide some elucidation of the relative strength of personal and cultural variables.

It is possible that the development of females is not so much different from that of males as that it proceeds at a different rate in the life span process. Many achieve a great deal later in life (Reis, 1991). Often, it is only after the family has been raised that a woman has the time and energy to devote to a career that will give her the status and attention needed to be recognized as highly achieving or even as eminent. The study of various cohort groups (Walker, Reis, & Leonard, 1992) indicated that many gifted women have not attained their career or lifestyle aspirations by the age of 29. Unfortunately, in order to achieve prominence in most fields, a continuous and long career pattern is often necessary.

The literature on gifted education points to the need for a study of women only, rather than the continued study of gender differences. Hollinger (1991) perceived a need to compare women with other women. "Further the time has come to examine individual differences within girls to determine those characteristics likely to be influenced by the environment and those experiences and conditions conducive to full development of potential" (Reis & Callahan, 1989, p. 104).

The literature on women's psychology calls for in-depth study of, and reorganization for, change of societal forces. My response to those who criticize eminence studies is that only by publicizing the accomplishments of women who have succeeded in the cultural milieu, flawed as it is, will we have any hope of breaking the cycle of exclusion and invisibility. Understanding the context in which females develop and live is vital to understanding the achievements of women. Without studying women from all fields and from all levels of achievement we will never be able to understand the limits, if there are any, to female potential. Women who have achieved are not anomalies; those who have not are not demonstrating problems. Those individuals designated as eminent can be used to not only make women more visible, but to dispel the assumption that women are not high achievers.

The study of exceptional women is one response to feminist criticisms of the "womanlessness" state of disciplines such as history and psychology. By re-envisioning women as contributors, this type of study can provide an initial step in the placement of women in history, as delineated by Lerner (1979). Social constructionism must begin with our understanding of the experiences of those women most knowledgeable and most capable of expressing themselves. "If the developmental experiences and personality traits that led to success could be pinpointed, then it might be possible to increase the number of successful women" (Crawford & Marecek, 1992). My focus is not on women who succeed doing what was traditionally "men's work," nor is the emphasis on personalistic explanations. Instead the search is for elements in the structure of the environments that improve conditions for females and enhance the possibilities that they can realize their potential. A cross-cultural approach partially addresses the criticism of eminence studies that they emphasize the characteristics of the individual and neglect the social structure. By necessity, a comparative study of eminent women across cultures emphasizes the effects of the society complete with gender-role social relations. What emerges is a preliminary portrayal of the interaction of gender and social organization. Eminence studies have been rejected by some feminist writers because they traditionally were based on the study of men with advantages not often afforded to women. This study will contribute to a new paradigm of eminence based on the experiences of female participants.

The common problem for women, despite country of origin, is how to balance the demands of family and career. In her work on morality, Gilligan (1982) referred to the varying roles that males and females have traditionally been assigned in all societies as contributing to assumptions about their differences. The traditional subservient roles of females contributed to different conceptions of morality and other ways of relating to other people. In keeping with this theory, a researcher would expect that women in general, despite national differences, would benefit similarly from facilitators, and suffer from barriers in their own environments.

The Purpose of the Study and the Research Question.

The motivation for this research derives from an effort to extend the knowledge base about nurturing giftedness in girls. This study of women recognized by others in their society for their talents, contributions, or positions is intended to raise awareness of female achievement as well as provide role models for others. If women are to be successfully integrated into all aspects of modern society, educators and parents must understand which factors facilitate career development and what promotes career success among women. Comparing the female leaders in Finland with those in Canada provides valuable information about these topics.

The rationale for this research is that a description of the career development of women in different cultures can further our understanding of the needs of gifted girls and provide ideas for supporting career development in women who desire to combine careers with families. This study should also serve to raise awareness of the importance of cross-national research and demonstrate the Nordic and Canadian women's status and position within each society. Understanding the phenomena preceding success in adult women is a basic requirement in the promotion of fulfillment of potential for girls.

When women have attained eminence or recognition in their field, others want to find out how they were able to do so, what things helped them achieve, and to whom they feel grateful. This study is designed to answer these questions. Because countries have different historical, linguistic, and religious settings, there may be different facilitative factors within the separate societies. The cultures targeted for this study are not similar in many respects. Differences among the subjects may derive from the socio-cultural influences within their own societies. On the other hand, if girls develop differently than boys, there may be much similarity in the perceptions of eminent women from all cultures.

The research question was: What are the propitious factors that link exceptional potential in girls to eminence in women? Because the researcher believed that this question could be studied from different perspectives, it was investigated using two methodologies and paradigms. Aggregates of individuals as well as the experience of individuals were studied in the two

components that comprise this project. Quantitative and qualitative measures were combined, a form of triangulation which serves to increase both the reliability and validity of the study (Kidder & Fine, 1987).

Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is in a paper format. The present chapter serves as an introduction, providing an overview of the background to the research question and an outline of the parts of the study. The second chapter of this dissertation provides a literature review. Two main contributory fields are included: education and psychology of the gifted, and women's studies. These sources are augmented with background material from the two countries pertaining to female achievement.

Two empirical studies were done and articles written about these studies are provided in Chapters 3 and 4. The quantitative study is described in the third chapter. In this study the research question was investigated using analysis of variance techniques and principal component analysis. Eminent women from Canada and Finland responded to a survey about the components in their lives that facilitated their career development. The quantitative portion of the study used the results of this questionnaire, first of all, to describe each data set, and then to compare statistically the results across the cultures sampled.

In Chapter 4 another paper is presented, which investigates the research question from the perspectives of Finnish eminent women interviewed in Finland in the fall of 1997. This study involved personal interviews with twelve women who are prominent leaders in politics, business, research science and the arts. The qualitative study provided an in-depth and richer understanding of how the factors affected Finnish individuals as they struggled to achieve their career aspirations within their own society.

Finally, in Chapter 5, a summary and discussion of the major aspects of the entire research project are provided. This final chapter of this thesis summarizes the separate findings of the quantitative and qualitative studies and then combines these results for several overall

conclusions and their implications. A discussion of the conclusions results in recommendations for the education and counselling of gifted girls.

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Chapter 2 Review of the Literature

Studies that analyze the problems encountered by women in America are increasingly common, yet an understanding of why all women achieve far less than men requires more in-depth study that includes Canada and also reaches beyond the shores of North America. Any study of the backgrounds of highly achieving women is a complex study, requiring an eclectic collection of background material. This unique study is even more complicated because it involves participants from two nations: Canada and Finland.

There is a dearth of studies referring to eminence in women in any nation because there are relatively few eminent women (Osche, 1991; Piirto, 1991; Silverman, 1995). A study of eminent women across nations has not been done; thus, there are no studies that are direct antecedents to this one. The literature review will consist of studies that are tangentially related and which arise from the following areas of study: the education and psychology of the gifted, the psychology of women, and studies of women in the two cultural contexts. Relevant projects include those few that refer to females from studies of the gifted, and to those from women's studies that discuss achievement. These works will be supplemented with background information on the status of women in the nations targeted.

A group of researchers associated with the education and psychology of the gifted have been striving to identify "barriers" which serve to prevent the equal participation of women in careers, higher education, and other activities in society. The inadequacies of evaluating female achievement from the traditional standards developed within the limits of gender from a male perspective have been pointed out and are now well accepted. Researchers in women's studies promulgate a somewhat different point of view regarding female achievement. Female development is envisioned as being different from male development and female experience is missing from documentation of most aspects of human endeavour.

Studies of Achievement in the Field of Gifted Education and Psychology

Researchers in the field of gifted education and psychology have recently shown some interest in the education and career development of girls with high ability. Educators have realized that most of the earlier research and literature about gifted children referred mainly to boys. The early eminence studies were usually about men and often involved researching the lives of deceased persons.

Most of the research relating to facilitation of success in women comes from those who study gifted women in the United States of America. The pattern of female success is not a common one in American society, and it is not an encouraged pattern. Early interest in the field focused on documentation of gender differences (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). The general focus today is on the explanation of gender differences. The explanations seem to be of two main types: identification of societal stumbling blocks and the impact of underlying gender-role distinctions.

The contemporary understanding of being gifted and talented is much broader than the traditional view that emphasized obtaining a high score on an IQ test. Being a gifted girl implies having a potential for high achievement; however, the path from being a gifted girl to becoming an achieving woman is an uncharted course. Gifted girls do not always become creative, contributing adults; as children, many eminent women were often not identified as gifted.

Models of giftedness vary greatly. Renzulli (1986) included creativity and motivation with above average ability as the three components necessary for giftedness. Marland's definition of gifted and talented children was "those who by virtue of their outstanding abilities are capable of high performance" and included those with "demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following areas: general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, creative or productive thinking, leadership ability, visual and performing arts, and psychomotor ability" (Marland, 1972, p.10). These models do not mention the importance of the home or the school environment on giftedness.

The psychosocial model developed by Tannenbaum (1983) identified the role of the environment as well as the general and specific abilities of the individual, plus non-intellective factors and chance factors. Another complex model involved the translation of promise into fulfillment, an issue that is described in the model of Gagné (1985). Both Gagné and Tannenbaum emphasized the importance of the family as an influence on the child's academic and social development. "The family and its role in moulding the gifted child's attitudes, values and aspirations may well be the most significant factor in talent development....If the family does not value, encourage and facilitate the growth of the young child's gifts, they will not develop, in later life, as talents" (Gross, 1993, 102).

Gagné (1985) differentiated between giftedness and talent wherein giftedness referred to the promise or the above average potential, and talent was the above average performance or fulfillment. He also differentiated between intellectual, creative, socio-emotional and sensori-motor ability domains. The family, school and identification models provide the catalysts for the giftedness of the individual mediated by his or her personality, attitudes, interest, and motivation.

The Underachievement of Gifted Women

The first study that referred to giftedness in females was Terman's longitudinal study begun in 1921 (Terman & Oden, 1959). His original sample of the top 1% of the population as nominated by teachers included 831 men and 613 women who had a minimum IQ score of 135. Statistics about the proportion of gifted women who ended up in traditional occupations, homemaking, or in professional careers were publicized, revealing that women achieved far less than men, both in terms of educational and occupational attainment.

Another early pioneer, Leta Hollingworth (1886-1939), pointed out that superior intellect and eminence are not synonymous, especially when it comes to women because of their sociological limitations (Silverman, 1989). In contrast to Terman, she did not attribute achievement to inherited ability, but to environmental factors, and emphasized the unequal opportunities afforded to women. Her real contribution concerned expanding the concept of giftedness from being a male trait to one which was common in females as well. Beginning with

these early studies, there has always been a question of the relative importance of individual factors and societal inequities.

Girls have been found to consistently receive higher grades in school than boys throughout elementary school, high school, and college (Reis, 1991). Their success in school is not matched by a similar level of achievement or success in careers. Since the revival of feminism in the 1970s, there has been a recognition of the fact that women are severely under-represented in high achievement in society, and much more attention has been given to the reasons for this under-representation. In their review of the status of women, Reis and Callahan (1989) emphasize that, despite apparent societal changes that have taken place in the 1970s and 1980s, gifted women continue to be underachievers.

Barriers to Success

Early work pointed to societal expectations as being an external barrier to female achievement. In a study of 25 female executives, Hennig (1973) stated that women are negatively affected by the double bind placed by society on high ability women. If they fail to achieve, they are not living up to their standards of performance; if they do achieve, they are not living up to society's expectation of the feminine role. Societal expectations directly affect the child through the home and the school. Clark (1992) lists a multitude of barriers that negatively impact gifted girls, evolving from several sources: the home, the school, and society in general.

Those who study barriers to female achievement stress that both internal and external barriers affect girls today. Noble (1989) believes that external barriers become translated into internal barriers as an additional set of obstacles to the success of the talented female. She listed the barriers to female advancement as being various interpersonal factors, socio-cultural factors, and intrapersonal factors. Interpersonal factors include the ways in which the peers and family of gifted girls underestimate and reject their exceptional abilities. The socio-cultural factors consist of inadequate preparation of females for careers, the double messages provided by society regarding careers, and the lack of time afforded females for creativity in their careers because of

family responsibilities. Internal barriers refer to the personality factors, interests, and values of the individual. The primary intrapersonal obstacle is self-doubt.

Hollinger (1991) stated that gifted girls in future will face the same external and internal barriers that have existed for the past two decades. The internal-external barrier debate is similar to the nature/nurture issue, in which we strive to establish causation as being culturally influenced or heredity based. Thus, external barriers are those which derive from the absence of social support; internal barriers derive from the personality or cognitive processes of the girls involved. Sex-role stereotyping and societal expectations were the first external barriers to be identified. "Of all existing barriers, sex-role socialization's impact on the child's developing self-belief system is the most pervasive and limiting" (Hollinger, 1991, p. 136).

Horner (1972) concluded that females have a fear of success that severely affects achievement motivation and actually motivates them to avoid success. Cultural stereotyping of sex roles and the mixed messages given to girls are cited by Reis (1987) as the factors that contribute to female underachievement. The internal barriers that she points to are fear of success, perfectionism, the impostor syndrome, and lack of planning for the future. A comprehensive list of problems that may beset gifted girls on their way to self-actualization includes the following: stereotyping, lower teacher expectations, absence of role models, listening to advice of others more, being too critical of themselves, lower self-confidence, and lower career expectations (Reis & Dobyns, 1991).

In a longitudinal study of career development, Fleming and Hollinger (1994) used intervention strategies to assist gifted and talented young women in understanding their own abilities and the educational and career options available, enabling them to participate in appropriate career planning. Their work in Project CHOICE (Creating Her Options in Career Exploration) involved identification of individual talents, abilities, and internal and external barriers, improving coping strategies and choices, and increasing levels of satisfaction. The initial program which involved high school sophomores and was completed in 1978, was followed up by contacting the original participants five years and ten years later. The first follow-up in 1983-84

revealed that 51% of the participants who were now in their senior year of college were majoring in traditionally feminine areas such as nursing, education, the arts, or social sciences. Results of the second follow-up in 1990 showed that, at age 29, only 48% of them had equalled or surpassed the career aspirations they had expressed when they were 15 years old.

Studies of Eminent Women

Early studies of genius and eminence focused on adult males and contributed findings related to their position within the family, personality characteristics, and talent development. Cox (1983), selected 300 highly eminent individuals based on their achievements in life. In her work, which took place in 1926, she identified their childhood mental traits as ambition, persistence, intellectual energy, and originality. As early as 1951, Anne Roe (1983) pointed out that hard work was a necessary component of achieving eminence in addition to intelligence. The concept of an achiever being "special" within the family structure was presented by Albert (1980) and Bloom (1985). Albert found that 90% of the political leaders and 74% of the Nobel Prize winners he studied were considered to be special within their families, often as a result of birth order or the death of a parent or sibling. Bloom studied the characteristics of 120 accomplished individuals and found that early home learning played a significant role in the development of talent. The specialness of these pianists, sculptors, mathematicians, neurologists, swimmers, and tennis champions took the form of continuous parental commitment to the advancement of their gifted child's talent or skill.

The study of eminent women is a recent phenomenon. Kerr (1985) focused on the biographies of seven well-known women: Maya Angelou, Marie Curie, Georgia O'Keefe, Margaret Mead, Eleanor Roosevelt, Beverly Sills, and Gertrude Stein. In describing these women, several commonalities were presented. As children, they were voracious readers and often received some type of specialized education. Many of them experienced a difficult adolescence, having to take responsibility early. These factors were related to the development of what Kerr termed "thorns" or "shells" that served to protect or insulate the self from the feelings of others. They all spent much time alone, a factor Kerr related to their common

experience of feeling different or special. In her follow-up book, Kerr (1994) provides some advice for guiding gifted girls, based on the experiences of her classmates and the lives of eminent women she studied. Because women do not always value achievement, she poses the question, "Is self-actualization optional?"

In a study of the reflections of older women on eminence, Reis (1995) emphasizes that experiences in early life provide the preparation for later achievement. A model of talent realization in women includes four emerging factors: above average ability and special talents, personality traits, environmental factors, and the perceived importance of talent manifestation. These merge into a woman's belief in herself and a desire to develop her talent.

Available research on giftedness, eminence, and females has been synthesized and augmented by Arnold, Noble, and Subotnik (1996). These authors propose a model of female talent realization in women in terms of foundations, filters, and spheres of influence. Foundational factors include components in society that serve to marginalize women from the centers of achievement as well as individual factors such as family background, personality characteristics, and resilience. These demographic characteristics are filtered by opportunities and the nature of the particular talent domain at the time. Women realize their potential in three spheres of influence: eminence, leadership, or self-actualization.

Contributions from the Psychology of Women

Studies of Female Development

There has been a shift in some contemporary literature from the explanation of gender differences to a more developmental approach. The major developmental theories were formulated on the basis of male development. Gilligan (1982) believes that women have "a different voice" and that female existence consists of relationships and interconnections with others. The independence that is nurtured in boys is not supported in girls, so that their development is entirely different. Women place more emphasis on, and value the relational part of their lives more than that of their careers. Girls learn through connection with others and through human relationships. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) have presented

the idea that women may have different ways of knowing from those of their male counterparts. Women's perspectives on "knowing" may be unique: use of traditional modes of learning that have been derived for the learning processes of men may not be generalizable to women.

Brown and Gilligan (1992), in their five-year study of 100 girls from a girls' school in Cleveland, Ohio, focused on the relational lives of the participants and how these changed with adolescence. For these subjects, early adolescence was described as a crossroads when a compromise between voice and relationship is reached. There was a tendency for the adolescent girls to dismiss their own experience and dissociate themselves in various ways. They modulated their voices or silenced themselves in their relationships in order to become more like some ideal image of what a woman should be. This recent work expanded and revised Gilligan's early work by suggesting that adolescence is a time of disconnection and crisis for girls.

Young girls tend to do very well in school and are confident and secure prior to adolescence. It is during adolescence that societal gender roles affect their lives and it is also at this time that females begin to show reduced intelligence scores, reduced enrollment in gifted programs, lowered self-regard, and lower self-concepts. There may be issues that are more important to girls than to boys. Some examples may be cooperation, interpersonal relationships, helping others, and ecological issues. Because relationships are so important to girls, their decision-making is influenced by consideration of the impact upon, and the opinions of, those close to them.

Achievement from a Feminist Perspective

Women have never been recognized in our society as highly achieving contributors to any field of endeavor. Feminist literature decries the patriarchal forces that serve to marginalize women in society and advocates a revision of social systems that neglect the experiences of women, whether historical, psychological, or professional. Pointing to sociopolitical processes as being the way that bodies of knowledge are constructed, feminist epistemologists suggest changing the unit of analysis from community to individuals (Phillips, 1995).

Access to professional recognition has been a persistent problem for women. The typical pattern for women of exclusion-invisibility-exclusion is circular in nature (Bohan, 1992). Because women have been excluded from written accounts of history and psychology, they remain invisible and, thus, few accounts of women's points of view are evident in the literature of many disciplines and fields. There has been recognition that human knowledge and notions of reality are models that are constructed socially, a philosophy called social constructionism. Social constructionism is advocated as a metatheory that will overcome the shortcomings of using positivism as the foundation for epistemology. Social constructionism emphasizes the importance of the context on human experience and includes values as part of science.

In a study of 77 female leaders, Astin and Leland (1991) contributed to our knowledge of a new paradigm of leadership as envisioned and applied by American women. This intergenerational study of women leaders grouped them as being predecessors, instigators, or inheritors. They were interviewed about their contributions to the women's movement and their experiences during the 1960s to the 1980s. Family background, role models, mentors, relationships, and key experiences related to education and work were explored as part of the important influences on the budding leaders.

The leadership style modelled by women school administrators has been differentiated from that of men in similar positions and has been described as relational leadership (Regan & Brooks, 1995). Instead of controlling, relational leadership demonstrates the following attributes: collaboration, caring, courage, intuition and vision.

Career research is strongly linked to achievement research (Jacobs, 1987). A factor analysis of components that contribute to career success of women in the retail industry in the United States (Gaskill, 1991) provides an example of the methodology applied to a similar field of study. Gaskill compared women who became upper level retail executives with other women who reached middle level executive positions using descriptive statistics, but combined these groups for a principal components analysis of factors. She identified three factors: providers of support and guidance, ability and ambition, and opportunity and luck. Further analysis revealed a

significant difference between the upper and middle level executives pertaining to the factor of luck and opportunity, with fewer of the higher level attributing their success to these variables than the other group.

Cross-National Research

A review of the cross-cultural literature shows that comparisons of women across nations have mainly focused on topics in child-rearing and child-bearing, women's roles in society, and national attitudes towards various issues. Even though there have been no comparisons of eminent women, it seems that cross-national studies of women are becoming popular. A recent article compared working women in managerial positions in the United States, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway and Japan (Wright & Baxter, 1995). This study of workplace authority found that the highest gender gap occurred in Japan and the lowest occurred in the English-speaking countries. The variation in gender gaps across nations was attributed to the effectiveness of organized women's movements and the availability of managerial positions.

Background Studies in the Two Contexts

There have been few studies of Canadian or Finnish women, either exclusively or comparatively. Highly successful women have not been specifically equated across the nations. The studies included herein provide only background information for the present study due to the unique nature of this research project.

Finland.

In recent years there has been some interest in the study of eminent Finnish women; however, at this time no publications are available in English. Published materials available on contemporary individual women who have become famous are also rare. However, many new web sites on the internet from Finland provide some information about the leaders especially in government and the arts.

Finland has always been a pioneer in women's initiatives. Women have taken a strong role in the workplace, the literature and arts, as well as in Finnish politics as the builders of the welfare

state (Manninen & Setälä, 1990). In 1906 Finland became the first country in Europe to grant political rights to women. Finnish women voted for the first time in the 1907 parliamentary elections. In this election many of the candidates must have been women as well; 19 out of the 200 representatives elected were female (Hallsten, 1933). One of the major literary contributors in the nineteenth century was playwright, Minna Canth (Heikkilä, 1987). Her drama provided a commentary on the vulnerability of women in marriage and in society at the time. The genre provided women from all walks of life access to her feminist ideas as early as the 1880s and 1890s.

Canada.

Studies that pertain to eminent Canadian women have been uncommon. Carisse (1976) undertook a study of 149 successful French-Canadian women and discovered that they came from families with higher than average intellectual and material resources. Froggatt and Hunter (1980) studied 40 Canadian women, 21 of whom had highly visible public profiles. They were compared to 19 other subjects who were successful but not as prominent. The family was mentioned as the base for their self-image by these successful Canadian women.

Solomon (1990) undertook a qualitative analysis of the characteristics of nine eminent Canadian women that emerged during interviews with each of them. The personal characteristics of the women surveyed included the following descriptions: hardworking, highly intelligent, well-adjusted, creative, early mastery of material, and being early readers.

In her dissertation, Norgang (1994) explored giftedness and success from the perspectives of thirteen gifted Canadian women who were participants in long distance running events. The themes they emphasized with regard to giftedness were the discovery and use of one's gifts, believing in oneself, compassion and transformation. Their definition of success included living consciously, having inner recognition, and being part of a community.

Yewchuk, Chatterton, and Jackson (1990) published a demographic description of eminent Canadian women using the same subjects who will comprise the Canadian sample in the study described in Chapter 3. Research into the family backgrounds of a subset of these eminent

Canadian women provided some insight into the characteristics of their parents (Yewchuk & Schlosser, 1995), and their perceptions of their childhood relationships with their siblings (Yewchuk & Schlosser, 1996).

Summary

This review of the literature highlights the various approaches to the subject of achievement in women. The focus of educators has been on assisting individuals in developing their talents and potentials while overcoming barriers to achievement. Feminists have successfully raised awareness of the marginalization of women by highlighting the repressive forces within society.

Recently the researchers in the field of gifted education and psychology have been extending their focus to include societal factors as they develop models of achievement. Feminist researchers have begun to study the importance of individual characteristics in leadership styles. These two main contributory groups are moving toward what, hopefully, will be a blending of resources, techniques, and models in the future.

Study of eminent women is still in its infancy in both of the countries of interest in this research project. Contributions of findings from other fields will provide the foundation for the future research required. The study of eminent women may present a basis for future cooperation among the contributory fields of study.

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Chapter 3

Attribution of Career Facilitators by Eminent Women from Canada and Finland

Educational and psychological researchers have neglected the study of women who have distinguished themselves from their peers by their outstanding talents or contributions. Studies of the eminent and portrayals of high achievers has usually been of men, largely because few women have attained the same status of fame. About ninety-seven percent of the illustrious people in western history have been males (Simonton, 1994).

Differential socialization and societal pressures are often ascribed as the determining factors in the underachievement of women. In the early 1900s, Hollingworth (Silverman, 1989) pointed out that women with superior intellect did not become eminent, because of sociological limitations and limited opportunities. The early works demonstrated the stereotyping of gender roles and led to a number of studies that sought to establish gender differences. Stereotyping delivers powerful messages to both girls and boys about their appropriate role, their individual importance, and their worth as persons. The research into sex differences that marked the 1970s served to promote some of the stereotypical attitudes in society by emphasizing that girls scored lower on average than boys in mathematical ability and higher in verbal ability.

From the earliest studies into adult achievement, factors emanating from societal forces have been designated as being most effective in barring women from high positions and from becoming famous. Feminist literature has, to a large extent, neglected the study of achievement in women. The focus of most of feminist authors has been on the inadequacies of contemporary society and its repressive effects on female expression and satisfaction. In contrast, research presented by specialists in the field of gifted education has emphasized the importance of individual characteristics and experiences in talent fulfillment. As the literature from the contributory fields of gifted education and women's studies indicates, there is no understanding of how the fields fit together or the extent of the overlap. Are there commonalities among women everywhere, or do those who write about women's issues refer only to women within the North American culture?

Relatively recent research has shown that the differences between girls and boys are very small and that they are not consistent over time. Another complication is that the gender differences are not consistent across cultures. On international examinations in physics, Japanese girls score lower than Japanese boys; meanwhile, their average is higher than that of American boys (Gipps & Murphy, 1994). These contradictions suggest that the differences between males and females are modifiable.

In this study highly successful contemporary women from two countries, Canada and Finland, were surveyed in an attempt to identify the elements in their lives that facilitated their achievement level. Individuals can only be helped to reach their potential when we understand the factors that hinder the process of self development, whether they exist within the person or derive from society. This work is an exploratory study into the similarities among factors that promote female achievement in two selected nations.

Finland has the reputation of being one of the world's first countries to grant women their political rights and is recognized as a leader in gender equity. Finland is one of the four top-ranking countries in the 1997 United Nation's Gender Empowerment Measure, all of which come from the Nordic belt. "These countries have adopted gender equality and women's empowerment as a conscious national policy" (UNDP, 1995, p. 75). Much national pride resides in the accomplishments of Finnish women.

Finland's progress in education, with women having higher enrollment ratios than men, and the gains women have made in closing the gender gap in earned income, contribute to its high standing. Finnish women have high employment rates and the unemployment rate for women is lower than that for men. Women have always had a better representative rate in Parliamentary seats than most other countries in the world, holding as many as 39% of the seats in 1990 and holding more than one third of the seats at the present time.

The participation of Finnish women in politics has not been matched in Canada. Following from a tradition which excluded women from politics, suffrage for Canadian women was granted later and their participation rate has been much lower. Canadian women became "persons"

federally in the 1920s, but until the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in the 1970s, they remained largely excluded from the political system and there were no changes for them except for the right to vote (Korne, 1985). As recently as 1985, Brodie states "...women now stand resolutely at the point of entry to public life and will not easily be turned back" (p. 128).

In the past, achievement of individual Canadian women went largely unrecognized. Recently, there has been some interest in the study of the characteristics of eminent Canadian women (Solomon, 1990) and the perspectives of gifted female runners (Norgang, 1994). The major Canadian study of eminent women was undertaken by Yewchuk, Chatterton, and Jackson (1990). Their sample comprises the Canadian sample used in this part of the study.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which women from two cultures (Canada and Finland) experience similar facilitators and barriers to achievement. The secondary aim was to determine how the experience of women from these different backgrounds varied. The overall purpose was to expand our understanding of female talent development applicable to contemporary girls and women despite their national origin. The research question was: What are the propitious factors that link exceptional potential in girls to eminence in women? In this study the research question was investigated using analysis of variance techniques and principal component analysis.

Method

Sample

Sample Selection.

The Canadian group, as sampled previously (Yewchuk, Chatterton, & Jackson, 1990), was contrasted with an unpublished data set from Finland. The Canadian sample was obtained in 1987. The Finnish sample was surveyed in 1991.

The sampling strategy is that of universal sampling for this part of the study because the intent was to scrutinize all eminent women within the designated cultures. The samples of women were obtained from lists of highly achieving, eminent women for Canada and Finland.

Some criterion of eminence is necessary and in this case it was to be listed in the Who's Who for that country. All the Canadian women listed in Who's Who of Canadian Women (Pasternak, 1986) who could be contacted were asked to participate. Similarly all the Finnish women listed in the Kuka kukin on (1986) were sent the translated questionnaire.

Comparison of the samples.

There were 827 respondents from Canada and 280 from Finland. In total, 1553 Canadians and 424 Finns were invited to participate. The response rates for the Canadians was 53% and for the Finns was 66%.

The two sample sets were compared by their responses to the demographic questions. The two groups were very similar as to birth order, education, marital status, and motherhood. The main differences were that the Finns were older on average and more of them were retired workers. There was also variation as to religious orientation.

In describing their families of origin, both samples had a range in family size of one to thirteen with the mean number of children being more than three. Sibling order was usually first with 49% of Canadians being the firstborn in their families as were 48% of the Finns. Second-borns comprised 26% of both samples.

Education levels for both samples were high. Over 66% of the Canadian and about 63% of the Finnish eminent women held at least one bachelor's degree. The two samples were also very similar as to marital status. Most of the Canadian women (61%) and Finnish women (58%) were married at the time of the survey. About 18% of the Finns and 19% of the Canadians were single. The divorce rates for the two samples were similar at more than 11%. The Canadian women reported having up to seven children with an average of 1.2 children. The Finns had family sizes up to six children with an average number of 1.6 children per woman. About 45% of the Canadians and 29% of the Finns reported having no children.

The modal age group for the Canadians was between 35 and 45 years, while the modal group for the Finns was between 56 and 65 years of age. Only 51% of the Finns were employed

full-time, 31.8% were retired, and 8.2% were free-lancers. In the Canadian group, 78% were full-time employed, 12.3% were full-time self-employed, and only 2.5% were retired.

Finland's people are very homogeneous culturally, unlike the diversity in Canadian society. Almost 89% of the Finns belonged to the State Church. Canadian respondents showed variety as to religion with 48% reporting being Protestant, 18% Catholic, 8% Jewish, and 21% saying they had no religious preference.

Data Collection

The data collection instrument for the quantitative portion is a questionnaire used for the Canadian study and directly translated into Finnish with minor changes to accommodate cultural differences for the group from Finland. The instrument is called the Eminent Women Survey. In Finnish that translates to Lahjakkaiden Naisten Tutkimus. The questionnaire was translated by a fluently bilingual university professor who resides in Finland.

This instrument was created to obtain demographic information about contemporary prominent women pertaining to their backgrounds, career development, and present occupations. In addition, their perceptions of the amount of sexism, sexual harassment, and sex stereotyping encountered in their environments was surveyed as well as the level of satisfaction they experienced with themselves and with their life.

The part to be used in this study was the section that deals with career development. The main question analyzed presented twenty-seven variables including other people, scheduling, funding, previous success levels, personal qualities, and attitudes in society. Other questions provided a more open scope for response which added richness and clarity to the results for the main question. In one of them, respondents were asked to list people who encouraged them in pursuit of their career goals, beginning with the person who was most significant in their lives. Another open-ended question asked them to list in order of importance the barriers they faced in attempting to attain their career goals. An additional survey question was used to provide an overview by asking the women to rank order some of the most obvious factors of success, including education, personality, help or support from others, hard work, superior ability and luck.

Data Analysis

The results for each country were analyzed separately and comprehensively for each question before any comparisons across the nations began. The frequency distributions for the responses for each sample set were reported and descriptive statistics were calculated. Because the respondents did not always answer all parts of the questions, cross-national comparisons required that valid percentages which eliminate the missing responses were calculated and analyzed. Measures of central tendency were compared and t-tests between the two samples were calculated, where appropriate. Factor analysis was used for each set of results for the first question in an attempt to arrive at a smaller number of factors than the total number of variables being rated. Cross-national comparison for this question involved calculation of a coefficient of congruence.

Results and Discussion

The findings are provided in this section separately for each sample, by question, followed by discussion of the results. After the presentation of the separate results, a comparison of the results for the two data sets for each question is supplied.

Survey Question 1

Please indicate the degree to which each of the following factors has facilitated your career aspirations and development. 1 refers to "greatly facilitated," 2 to "facilitated," 3 to "not significant or irrelevant," 4 to "deterred," 5 to "greatly deterred."

Twenty-seven variables were listed and the respondents were asked to indicate on a five-point scale the degree to which each was a facilitator or a barrier to their success. For a list of these variables see Table 1 or Table 2.

Results for the Canadian Sample

In Table 1, the descriptive statistics and the percentage breakdowns for each of the factors are presented as reported for the Canadian respondents. The valid number of responses for each

variable is provided in the first column, labelled "n." Other descriptive statistics include the mean and the standard deviation. The valid percentages in the last five columns provide the percentage breakdown of the valid responses for the categories labelled 1 to 5.

A low mean close to 1 would mean that the variable was viewed as facilitative; whereas, a high mean would signify that the variable is more of a deterrent. A mean in the middle range may signify irrelevancy or lack of either helping or hindering women in their pursuit of their goals. Variables with the highest percentages in the "greatly facilitated" or "facilitated" column are considered to be the most helpful factors and those with the highest percentages in the last two categories of "deterred" or "greatly deterred" are considered to be barriers to career development. For example, as shown in Table 1, there were 800 Canadian women who supplied an answer concerning the variable "mother." The mean for these responses was 1.83 with a standard deviation of 0.92. Such a low mean indicates that most of the women believed that their mothers were facilitative in their career development and fulfillment of their career aspirations. In fact, 44.6% of the women responded with a "1," showing that their mothers "greatly facilitated," and 34.9% answered with a "2," indicating that their mothers "facilitated."

Table 1

Variables Contributing to Career Development as Reported by Canadian Eminent Women

	n	mean	std. dev.	Percents				
				Greatly Facilitated (1)	Facilitated (2)	Irrelevant (3)	Deterred (4)	Greatly Deterred (5)
Mother	800	1.83	0.92	44.6	34.9	14.8	4.6	1.1
Father	799	1.89	0.93	40.9	35.7	18.3	3.5	1.6
Siblings	708	2.66	0.70	8.3	21.5	66.7	2.7	0.8
Grandparents	697	2.75	0.59	5.3	16.4	77.0	0.6	0.7
Spouse	672	1.94	1.05	45.8	25.1	20.7	6.1	2.2
Children	525	2.80	0.86	10.9	15.8	57.3	14.9	1.1
Friends	762	2.31	0.75	15.1	40.6	42.7	1.6	0.1
School teachers	768	2.36	0.81	15.6	38.0	41.7	4.0	0.7
School counsellors	664	3.01	0.69	3.3	8.9	75.6	8.0	4.2
Professors/instructors/coaches	752	2.24	0.77	17.6	43.0	37.6	1.5	0.4
Colleagues	755	2.14	0.77	19.5	50.1	27.7	2.1	0.7
Availability of funds/scholarships	737	2.57	0.94	16.3	22.1	53.3	4.5	3.8
Parents' socio-economic status	774	2.58	1.00	14.5	32.8	37.3	11.4	4.0
Family connections	752	2.89	0.56	3.3	10.5	81.8	2.8	1.6
Your own personal convictions	796	1.19	0.46	83.0	15.1	1.5	0.4	0.0
Success in high school	783	1.83	0.88	43.9	32.2	21.1	2.2	0.6
Success in post-sec. institution	761	1.75	0.78	44.8	37.5	16.4	1.1	0.3
Proximity of educational institutions	748	2.53	0.84	13.9	26.5	53.6	4.7	1.3
Proximity employment opportunities	765	2.51	0.84	13.9	29.0	50.6	5.4	1.2
Proximity of spouse's employment	631	2.75	0.76	8.4	17.7	66.4	5.7	1.7
Availability of child care	561	2.69	0.92	13.7	19.1	54.9	9.4	2.9
Flexibility of time schedules at work	690	2.66	0.86	12.6	20.4	57.7	7.4	1.9
Flexibility time schedules at school	654	2.83	0.58	4.7	11.9	79.5	3.2	0.6
Your own personal qualities	792	1.32	0.78	71.3	26.1	1.4	1.0	0.1
Being female	770	3.02	0.96	7.4	19.0	41.9	27.8	3.9
Stereotypical attitudes of others	760	3.42	0.74	1.1	4.3	53.2	33.9	7.5
Work experience/activities	762	1.87	0.72	31.4	51.6	15.5	1.4	0.1

Canadian women reported the highest percentage of "greatly facilitated" in relation to their own personal convictions (83.0%) and their own personal qualities (71.3%). Success in high school (43.9%) and success in post-secondary institutions (44.8%) were also greatly facilitative to career success. In addition, Canadians reported that their spouses (45.8%), mothers (44.6%), and fathers (40.9%) greatly helped them. Those variables with the highest percentage in the second category of being "facilitative" were work experiences/activities (51.6%), professors/instructors/coaches (43.0%) and colleagues (50.1%).

For most of the variables listed, the highest percentage of response was in the "not significant or irrelevant" category. These irrelevant variables included:

- family connections (81.8%)
- flexibility of time schedules at school (79.5%)
- grandparents (77.0%)
- school counsellors (75.6%)
- siblings (66.7%)
- proximity of spouse's employment (66.4%)
- flexibility of time schedules at work (57.7%)
- children (57.3%)
- availability of child care (54.9%)
- proximity of educational institutions (53.6%)
- proximity of employment opportunities (50.6%)
- availability of funds/scholarships (53.3%)
- stereotypical attitudes of others (53.2%)
- being female (41.9%)

The highest reported deterrents for the Canadian women were the stereotypical attitudes of others (33.9%) and being female (27.8%). There were few women who reported "greatly deterred" for any of the variables. The greatest deterrents were the stereotypical attitudes of others (7.5%) and the parents' socioeconomic status (4.0%).

As these results for Question 1 illustrate, facilitation of career development is a complex issue. The large number of variables reported as irrelevant, i.e., neither facilitative nor deterring, are augmented by other variables for which the responses are mixed. Variables such as friends,

school teachers, and parents' socioeconomic position showed unclear results with nearly the same proportion of respondents rating them as facilitative and irrelevant.

In addition to the variables listed, there was space provided for the respondents to add other variables that might have made an impact on their lives. Eighty women provided comments in this part of the question, which largely confirmed the importance of the personal traits of the eminent woman and the support of family members in career development. A few of the respondents listed more than one factor.

Many of their responses were a reiteration of the variables listed in the question and referred to factors that facilitated career advancement. These included references to their own characteristics and convictions (n=19), support of the other people who were listed in the question (n=10), availability of scholarship (n=1), availability of child care (n=1), and flexibility of work schedules (n=1). Some of the answers that were not duplication of those mentioned in the question included the influence of mentors and role models (n=8), support of a boss (n=4), women's groups (n=2), and taking advantage of opportunities that arose (n=11). Other responses included the need for money (n=3), ethnic background (n=2), being single (n=4), self-employment (n=2), the excellence of their work (n=3), luck (n=2), higher education (n=2), emigrating to Canada (n=2).

Seven written responses listed barriers to their career development. The barriers reported included being in an industry that is "poor in advancement or development of women historically and presently," receiving "obscene phone calls, letter and gifts from classmate," and being told she was "too old." Two women referred to a lack of opportunity to advance because of their spouse's unwillingness to move. Other barriers referred to lacking the necessary funds for adequate child care, and lacking self-confidence.

Results for the Finnish Sample

In Table 2, the descriptive statistics and the frequency distribution of the responses from the Finnish respondents are provided. The descriptive statistics are interpreted in the same way they were for Table 1 for the Canadian results. For example, over 79% of the Finnish respondents reported that their mother greatly facilitated or facilitated their career development, and only 3.5% felt that their mother deterred or greatly deterred that development. There were 255 responses and their average rating of "mother" was 1.80, a low mean more indicative of facilitation than of irrelevance or deterrence.

Table 2

Variables Contributing to Career Development as Reported by Finnish Eminent Women

	n	mean	std. dev.	Percents				
				Greatly Facilitated (1)	Facilitated (2)	Irrelevant (3)	Deterred (4)	Greatly Deterred (5)
Mother	255	1.80	0.88	45.5	33.7	17.3	2.7	0.8
Father	251	1.86	0.97	46.6	27.9	20.7	2.8	2.0
Siblings	280	2.56	0.75	12.8	20.5	64.8	1.4	0.5
Grandparents	195	2.71	0.64	10.3	8.2	81.5	0.0	0.0
Spouse	208	1.85	1.05	50.0	26.4	15.4	5.3	2.9
Children	182	2.55	0.99	17.0	28.0	39.0	14.3	1.6
Friends	243	2.28	0.76	16.9	39.9	42.0	0.8	0.4
School teachers	248	2.37	0.85	16.1	37.9	39.9	4.8	1.2
School counsellors	157	2.85	0.59	6.4	5.1	86.6	0.6	1.3
Professors/instructors/coaches	239	2.13	0.87	28.0	34.3	33.9	3.8	0.0
Colleagues	239	2.49	0.80	9.6	41.4	40.6	7.5	0.8
Availability of funds/scholarships	225	2.24	0.80	21.3	35.1	41.8	1.8	0.0
Parents' socio-economic status	245	2.48	0.95	16.7	32.2	40.0	8.6	2.4
Family connections	224	2.37	0.98	21.4	32.6	36.2	7.1	2.7
Your own personal convictions	247	1.33	0.63	74.5	19.0	6.1	0.0	0.4
Success in high school	245	2.17	0.81	24.1	35.9	38.8	1.2	0.0
Success in post-sec. institution	241	1.84	0.76	38.2	39.4	22.4	0.0	0.0
Proximity of educational institutions	235	2.62	0.96	14.9	23.0	51.5	6.4	4.3
Proximity employment opportunities	232	2.44	0.89	17.7	28.9	47.8	3.4	2.2
Proximity of spouse's employment	196	2.58	0.88	12.2	29.1	50.0	6.1	2.6
Availability of child care	188	2.30	1.23	34.6	25.0	22.9	11.2	6.4
Flexibility of time schedules at work	212	2.41	0.95	20.3	29.2	42.5	5.7	2.4
Flexibility time schedules at school	202	2.55	0.80	11.9	27.7	55.4	3.5	1.5
Your own personal qualities	247	1.46	0.64	59.5	36.4	2.8	0.8	0.4
Being female	247	2.79	0.99	11.7	23.1	42.5	19.8	2.8
Stereotypical attitudes of others	220	3.32	0.67	0.5	3.6	66.4	22.7	6.8
Work experience/activities	237	1.71	0.70	41.8	46.4	11.4	0.0	0.4

The variables that the Finnish women believed were the greatest facilitators were their own personal convictions (74.5%) and their own personal qualities (59.5%). Spouses (50.0%), fathers (46.6%), mothers (45.5%), and the availability of child care (34.6%) were also greatly facilitative in their career development. Variables with the highest proportion of the sample reporting in the "facilitative" category were work experiences/activities (46.4%), and success in post-secondary institutions (39.4%).

Finnish women reported that the majority of the variables were most commonly irrelevant to their career development. Those variables that were predominately reported as neither facilitating or deterring included:

- school counsellors (86.6%)
- grandparents (81.5%)
- stereotypical attitudes of others (66.4%)
- siblings (64.8%)
- flexibility of time schedules at school (55.4%)
- proximity of educational institutions (51.5%)
- proximity of spouse's employment (50.0%)
- proximity of employment opportunities (47.8%)
- being female (42.5%)
- flexibility of time schedules at work (42.5%)
- availability of funds/scholarships (41.8%)
- parents' socioeconomic status (40.0%)
- children (39.0%).

The variables with the highest percentages reporting in the "deterred" category were the stereotypical attitudes of others (22.7%) and being female (19.8%). Stereotypical attitudes of others also had the highest percentage of "greatly deterring." Some of the variables were not easily categorized because approximately the same percentage of respondents rated them as facilitative as irrelevant in their career development. These ambiguous results pertained to the following variables: friends, school teachers, professors/instructors/coaches, colleagues, family connections, and success in high school.

In the space for adding other variables with an effect on their career development, 58 Finnish respondents added a comment. All of these comments provided descriptions of facilitators and most of them included reference to various aspects of themselves as being contributory (n=36). Other remarks included reference to coincidence (n=10), the support of others (n=9), and the need to overcome financial difficulties (n=3).

Comparing the Two Samples

Similarities in the frequency distributions for the two samples are evident from the tables. Despite the similarities in the way the two sample sets answered this question, there were some obvious differences. In an effort to compare the results for the two sample sets, three procedures were used: rank-order correlation, t-tests, and factor analysis.

Rank order correlation.

The means for each of the 27 variables were rank ordered for the two samples and these ranks are provided as well as the means in Table 3. The Spearman's rank order correlation was calculated on the two sets of rank orders. A high correlation between the sample sets was found (r=.86).

The part of the tables that provides information directly related to the research question is in the first two columns, where respondents indicated the amount of help each variable provided in their career development. In order to compare the rankings of the 27 variables as regards to their facilitation only, the first category of "greatly facilitated" and the second category "facilitated" were combined and the variables were given a ranking. Spearman's rank order correlation was calculated again on the two sets of rank orders. Once more, according to this measure, there was very little difference in how the two samples responded to facilitative factors (r=.91).

t-tests.

The means and results of independent samples t-tests for the 27 variables are provided in Table 3. Note that higher means indicate lower facilitation. In recognition of the problem that exists with performing multiple t-tests, the alpha level was adjusted according to Bonferroni criteria.

Table 3

Means, Ranks, and t-tests for Significant Differences among the Canadian and Finnish Samples

Variable	Canadian Mean	Rank for Canadian Mean	Finnish Mean	Rank for Finnish Mean	t-test
Mother	1.83	4.5	1.80	4	0.48
Father	1.89	7	1.86	7	0.53
Siblings	2.66	17.5	2.56	21	1.82
Grandparents	2.75	20.5	2.71	24	0.77
Spouse	1.94	8	1.85	6	1.09
Children	2.80	22	2.55	19.5	2.93
Friends	2.31	11	2.28	11	0.56
School teachers	2.36	12	2.37	13.5	-0.17
School counsellors	3.01	25	2.85	26	2.62
Professors/instructors/coaches	2.24	10	2.13	8	1.72
Colleagues	2.14	9	2.49	18	-5.77*
Availability of funds/scholarships	2.57	15	2.24	10	4.81*
Parents' socio-economic status	2.58	16	2.48	17	1.36
Family connections	2.89	24	2.37	13.5	7.51*
Your own personal convictions	1.19	1	1.33	1	-3.16
Success in high school	1.83	4.5	2.17	9	-5.36*
Success in post-secondary institution	1.75	3	1.84	5	-1.69
Proximity of educational institutions	2.53	14	2.62	23	-1.39
Proximity of employment opportunities	2.51	13	2.44	16	1.16
Proximity of spouse's employment	2.75	20.5	2.58	22	2.44
Availability of child care	2.69	19	2.30	12	3.97*
Flexibility of time schedules at work	2.66	17.5	2.41	15	3.41
Flexibility of time schedules at school	2.83	23	2.55	19.5	4.60*
Your own personal qualities	1.32	2	1.46	2	-3.03
Being female	3.02	26	2.79	25	3.24
Stereotypical attitudes of others	3.42	27	3.32	27	2.02
Work experience/activities	1.87	6	1.71	3	3.10

Note: *p<.001.

The Canadian and Finnish respondents seemed to answer the first question similarly as indicated by the rank order correlations and according to the overall pattern of responses. Therefore, the results of the t-tests were unexpected. Of the 27 variables measured, six had significant differences ($p<.001$) among the means for the two samples. It would seem that, although the same patterns of response occur in the frequency distributions, some variables have a different impact in the different societal contexts.

For most of the variables with significant differences among the samples, the Canadian group had a higher mean, indicating that the factors were less facilitative for the respondents. These less facilitative factors included the availability of funding/scholarships, family connections, availability of child care, and flexibility of time schedules at school. The Finns reported higher means for colleagues and success in high school.

Finnish and Canadian women rated the people in their lives in much the same way. Mothers, fathers and spouses were categorized as being the most helpful; there was no significant difference in how they were rated by the participants from the two countries. There were no significant differences in the amounts of helpfulness attributed to their professors, instructors, coaches, school teachers, school counsellors, friends, siblings, children, and grandparents. The only variable relating to people that showed a significant difference between the samples was colleagues. Colleagues were rated as more facilitative by Canadian women.

Most of the significant differences occurred among those factors that pertain to societal conditions. The largest difference in the ranking occurred with the variable "family connections," resulting in the highest t-test value. Interestingly, the other variable relating to the family of origin, the socioeconomic status of the parents, did not have a significant difference among the two samples. Availability of funding/scholarships was rated as significantly more facilitative by Finnish women as was flexibility of time schedules at school. The availability of child care also varied significantly among the two samples, with Canadians again finding it more of a deterrent. Success in high school meant much more to the Canadian women. Success in post-secondary school was more facilitative than success in high school for both groups, but there was no

significant difference in how they reported post-secondary success. The variable most commonly reported as a deterrent to success by both groups of eminent women did not demonstrate a significant difference: The stereotypical attitudes of others had a similar negative effect on both samples.

Factor analysis.

The numerical ratings of the 27 variables listed in Question 1 were factor analyzed. Exploratory factor analysis was done separately for the two sample sets, first for the Canadian responses and then for the Finnish responses. The same procedures were followed for each sample set as the question of the number of factors was being explored and the final solution was being established, based on the principles of parsimony and interpretability. The extractions, which included principal component analysis, image analysis and maximum likelihood, were followed by orthogonal rotation and oblique rotation.

Factor analysis was used because of the large number of variables that must be considered in regards to the research question. "Factor analysis can be used to search data for possible qualitative and quantitative distinctions, and is particularly useful when the sheer amount of available data exceeds comprehensibility. Out of this exploratory work can arise new constructs and hypotheses for future theory and research" (Gorsuch, 1983, p. 4).

Factor analysis of the Canadian results.

The correlation matrix for the Canadians showed correlations that varied from -.00068 to .55562. The highest correlation occurred with the variables: success in high school and success in post-secondary institutions. The lowest correlation was between school counsellors and flexibility of time at work. The matrix with a determinant of .011254 was determined to be analyzable with a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy of .671 and Bartlett Test of Sphericity of 3662.162 (significance <.0001).

Principal components analysis for the Canadian data yielded eigenvalues that varied from 3.35 to .31. Nine factors had eigenvalues exceeding 1.0. These nine accounted for 56.9% of the total variance. The mean calculated communality was .569. The scree test indicated five

factors. Image analysis followed by varimax rotation converged after 75 iterations. Four factors were indicated. The mean calculated communality was .241. These initial runs provided no clear solution to the number of factors. Because of this indeterminacy problem, maximum likelihood analyses were run on a random sample of 100, setting the number of factors from four to nine. This procedure eliminated any number of factors greater than seven.

In a principal components truncated to the four factors and rotated using varimax, the solution was obtained after six iterations. Using .35 as a criterion, 24 of the variables had a simple structure and the other three did not load on any of the four factors. Six variables loaded on the first factor, six on the second, five on the third, and six on the fourth. The same procedure used with a principal components truncated to five factors and rotated with varimax converged after six iterations. Using .35 as the cut-off, 25 variables had simple structure while "grandparents" and "spouse" did not load on any of the five factors. Three of the factors had six variables each with salient loadings, one had only five variables and the last one had only two variables loading on it.

An exploratory run of principal axis factoring followed by direct oblimin with delta = -1 was done in an attempt to see if there could be correlation among the five factors. The factor correlation matrix containing the correlations among the factors was nearly the identity matrix with all the correlations near zero. The range of correlations was from -.040 to .094. Further oblique rotations were not pursued because there was no indication of correlated factors.

Based on its ease of interpretability and using the principle of parsimony, my final solution for the Canadian sample was the five factor solution (Table 4). The first factor in this final solution consisted of school teachers, counsellors, professors/instructors/coaches, availability of funds/scholarships, success in high school, and success in post-secondary institution. These variables are all school related. Those variables with salient loadings on the second factor were those related to the proximity and flexibility inherent in employment or educational institutions. The third factor consisted of the variables representing the people in the family of origin. Salient loadings for the fourth factor occurred in relation to the people in the current family situation and

personal convictions and qualities. Being female and the stereotypical attitudes of others loaded heavily on the fifth factor.

Table 4

The Five-factor Solution for the Canadian Sample of Eminent Women

	I	II	III	IV	V
Mother	.171	-.007	**.657**	.023	-.094
Father	.145	-.015	**.698**	-.031	-.049
Siblings	-.005	-.100	**.494**	.215	.020
Grandparents	.089	-.116	.319	.192	.001
Spouse	-.040	.272	.241	.127	.035
Children	-.048	.054	-.045	**.368**	.229
Friends	.225	-.070	-.005	**.524**	.141
School teachers	**.767**	-.056	.052	.054	.079
School counsellors	**.517**	-.061	-.084	-.084	.250
Professors/instructors/coaches	**.695**	.102	.007	.036	.056
Colleagues	.189	.123	-.018	**.445**	.262
Availability of funds/scholarships	**.406**	.337	.152	-.111	-.015
Parents' socio-economic status	-.046	.221	**.635**	-.126	.115
Family connections	-.085	.160	**.509**	-.120	.222
Your own personal convictions	.041	.066	.175	**.599**	-.219
Success in high school	**.574**	.119	.185	.156	-.306
Success in post-secondary institution	**.592**	.166	.172	.179	-.304
Proximity of educational institutions	.258	**.539**	-.037	.023	-.183
Proximity of employment opportunities	-.019	**.646**	-.109	.149	.041
Proximity of spouse's employment	.035	**.678**	.014	-.058	.102
Availability of child care	-.025	**.568**	.118	.003	-.001
Flexibility of time schedules at work	.037	**.573**	.094	.050	.096
Flexibility of time schedules at school	.082	**.431**	-.091	.141	-.009
Your own personal qualities	-.037	.056	.126	**.650**	-.142
Being female	-.007	.065	.096	.160	**.693**
Stereotypical attitudes of others	.056	.049	.083	-.029	**.783**
Work experience/activities	-.072	.151	-.046	**.528**	.020

Factor analysis of the Finnish results.

The correlation matrix for the Finnish sample had coefficients ranging from -.00157 to .55828. The highest correlation was between the variables of flexibility of time schedules at work and flexibility of time schedules at school. The lowest was for school teachers and grandparents. The correlation matrix with a determinant .0016116 was determined to be factor-analyzable. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .716 and the Bartlett Test of Sphericity was 1730.88 (significance <.0001).

In a principal components analysis the eigenvalues varied from 4.49 to 0.29. The Kaiser-Guttman rule of eigenvalues greater than 1 provided a nine factor solution. These nine accounted for 61.5% of the total variance. The communalities varied from .29 to .76. The highest communality was for the variable labelled the proximity of employment opportunities. The lowest communality was for grandparents. The mean calculated communality was .615. The scree test for the Finnish sample indicated five factors.

Image analysis followed by varimax rotation converged after 23 iterations. Five factors were indicated. The mean calculated communality was .322. Maximum likelihood analysis was run on a random sample of 100 from the sample and the results demonstrated the inadequacy of a six-factor model or one with more than six factors.

In an effort to obtain a simple structure, both the five factor solutions and four-factor solutions were investigated using principal components extractions and transforming. In a principal components truncated to the four factors, and rotated using varimax, the solution was obtained after eight iterations. Using .35 as a criterion, 25 of the variables had a simple structure, one variable did not load on any of the four factors and one was complex. The complex variable was family connections, which loaded saliently on both the second and third factor. Personal convictions did not load on any of the factors. Ten variables loaded on the first factor, six on the second, seven on the third, and four on the fourth.

The same procedure used with a principal components truncated to five factors and rotated with varimax converged after ten iterations. Using .35 as the cut-off, 22 variables had simple

structure and five of the variables were complex and loaded on two of the factors. These five included parent socioeconomic status, family connections, proximity of spousal employment, availability of child care, and personal qualities. The six factor solution using .35 as a criterion provided 24 simple variables with parental socioeconomic status, availability of child care, and proximity of spousal employment as complex variables, loading on two factors.

The next step was to find a solution that would give simple structure with each item loading only on one factor. Transformation using direct oblimin was the next procedure undertaken (delta=0). For the five-factor solution only 20 variables were simple, using .35 as the criterion. Oblimin converged after 38 iterations. The correlations among the factors varied from .037 to .166. For the four factor model, 23 variables had simple structure and oblimin converged after 20 iterations. The factor correlations varied from .056 to -.209. Oblique rotation did not improve the number of variables with simple structure, so no further non-orthogonal transformations were attempted.

The four factor solution with orthogonal rotation using varimax was chosen as the best solution based on the criteria of parsimony and interpretability (Table 5). In the four-factor solution, the first factor had all the people associated with school and work as well as success in educational institutions with salient loadings. The second factor included the spouse and conditions of the workplace for both the respondent and the spouse, as well as child care. The third factor included the people in the family of origin as well as being female. Proximity of work and education, socio-economic status and stereotypy loaded strongly on the fourth factor.

Table 5

The Four-factor Solution for the Finnish Sample of Eminent Women

	I	II	III	IV
Mother	.159	-.104	**.580**	.149
Father	.212	-.106	**.584**	.238
Siblings	.149	-.048	**.574**	.029
Grandparents	-.055	.102	**.363**	.007
Spouse	-.025	**.679**	.217	-.162
Children	.117	.333	**.448**	-.251
Friends	**.373**	.160	.344	-.196
School teachers	**.578**	-.071	.266	.168
School counsellors	**.380**	.106	.158	.110
Professors/instructors/coaches	**.463**	.144	.036	.344
Colleagues	**.404**	.130	.050	-.025
Availability of funds/scholarships	**.462**	.184	-.230	.014
Parents' socio-economic status	-.013	.173	.261	**.465**
Family connections	.030	**.581**	**.467**	.074
Your own personal convictions	.327	.301	.189	-.224
Success in high school	**.582**	-.305	.127	.053
Success in post-secondary institution	**.758**	-.038	-.065	.109
Proximity of educational institutions	.106	-.054	-.024	**.709**
Proximity of employment opportunities	.290	.270	-.038	**.543**
Proximity of spouse's employment	.012	**.556**	.154	.291
Availability of child care	.139	**.654**	.035	.126
Flexibility of time schedules at work	.244	**.577**	-.222	.122
Flexibility of time schedules at school	.230	**.518**	-.060	.277
Your own personal qualities	**.547**	.193	.122	-.124
Being female	.034	.229	**.404**	.118
Stereotypical attitudes of others	-.090	-.010	.248	**.499**
Work experience/activities	**.411**	.315	.110	.028

Comparing the factor analytic solutions.

A principal component analysis yielded nine eigenvalues with a value exceeding one for both samples. The scree tests for the two samples indicated five factors. Image analysis followed by varimax produced four factors for the Canadian sample and five for the Finnish sample.

The final interpretable solution with the simplest structure for the samples yielded a different number of factors, five for the Canadians and four for the Finns. The search for a meaningful simple solution in the Canadian sample resulted in acceptance of a five factor principal components solution rotated to a varimax criterion. These five factors accounted for 40% of the variance in the Canadian sample. The accepted final solution for the Finnish sample was the four-factor solution rotated using varimax which accounted for 38% of the total variance.

Factor analyses results for the two sample groups were compared using a Procrustes program that calculated an item congruence index for each variable and a factor congruence index for each factor as well as an overall congruence index. First of all, the five-factor solutions were compared using the Canadian solution as the norm; then the four-factor solutions were compared using Finnish coefficients as the norms.

The results of the congruence coefficients for the five factor solution yielded an overall congruence index of .82. This is not high enough to conclude that the two samples responded in the same way. The coefficient of congruence should be at least .90 (Hakstian & Vandenberg, 1979). The factor congruences ranged from .92 to .65. The variables spouse and availability of funds/scholarships showed very low item congruences (less than .60).

To be open to an alternative hypothesis regarding the number of factors, the same procedure was used to evaluate the comparability of the two samples using a four-factor solution. The congruence coefficient for a four-factor solution was .83 which was once again too low to say that the two samples are the same. Factor congruences varied from .93 to .73. The items with item congruences less than .60 were stereotypical attitudes of others, availability of funds/scholarships, and school counsellors.

The contribution of factor analysis to this study was that its results were needed to clarify some of the ambiguity that arose regarding the similarity of the responses across cultures. The rank order correlations and the overall pattern of responses using the valid percentages seemed to indicate general agreement among the two sample sets of eminent women. However, the t-test results demonstrated considerable differences between them among some of the variables. The low congruence coefficients found in the factor analysis tended to support the t-test results indicating considerable difference among the women's responses across the two cultures. Discrepancies between how the Canadians and Finns answered the various items in this question were large enough to provide significant differences among the means measured by the t-tests and also among the intercorrelations measured in the factor analytic procedures.

Survey Question 2

List, beginning with the most significant, three persons who encouraged you in pursuit of your career goals.

The results for this survey question were analyzed separately for the Canadians and Finns and then compared. The named persons were studied in order of being listed by the respondents and categorized as first choice, second choice, and third choice.

Results for the Canadian Sample

The responses for these three choices for the Canadian women are provided in Table 6. Mothers and spouses were most often provided in the first choice position as the most significant people who encouraged these women in the pursuit of career goals. Fathers were the third most commonly listed persons. Over half the respondents selected one of these three people as being of primary importance. Parents and employers/supervisors were the next most common category of response. Professors and the self were included much less often. Siblings, boyfriends, families, and children were rarely named as most significant.

The list of second choices shows a similar pattern with spouse and mothers being highly rated. Fathers have been rated as lower in significance, but friends have become nearly twice as important as for the first choice.

About one-quarter of the Canadian women did not make a third choice even though the questionnaire was designed specifically for three choices. Friends and spouses were closely ranked as the third choices. Employers/supervisors, colleagues and professors complete the five most common responses. The other individuals were selected by less than eight percent of the respondents.

Table 6

Persons Who Provided Encouragement to Canadian Women in Order of Choice

Person Named	First choice	Second choice	Third choice	Total
Mother	161	91	29	281
Father	130	73	27	230
Parents	62	19	21	102
Family	4	3	4	11
Sister	5	13	18	36
Brother	8	6	6	15
Other relatives	14	29	20	63
Spouse	160	105	91	356
Children	1	13	21	35
Boyfriend	5	19	12	56
Friend	30	81	100	211
Mentor/Role model	12	18	19	49
Teacher/Principal/Counsellor	34	58	48	140
Professor	41	64	55	160
Employer/Supervisor	62	74	60	196
Colleague	16	54	59	129
Others	12	17	21	50
Self	39	12	10	61
No Response	36	75	205	316

Note: n= 827

The column which provides the totals for the individuals named can be used to rank order the significant persons most often chosen by eminent women. The spouse was of foremost significance or very close to being first in all three positions and he was chosen more often than any other individual. Mothers consistently out-ranked fathers in all three positions. The indiscriminate use of the word "parent" obscures somewhat the specific selections of mother and father. However, either parent would be unlikely to surpass the supremacy of spouse as being the most important person to these respondents. Friends also provide an important role in encouragement for career goals. Employers and supervisors are selected only slightly less than friends. Although they are less important than the spouse, the parents, and the friends, their role is consistently more important than that of all other family and non-family members.

Results for the Finnish Sample

The responses for the three choices of the Finnish eminent respondents, as they were translated and tabulated in Finland, are provided in Table 7. When asked to list in order of importance those who provided them with the most encouragement, the Finns gave supremacy to their spouses. Also in the list of first choices, fathers out-ranked professors/teachers and mothers.

The list of second choices showed a different pattern with people who were not in the immediate families rising in popularity. Professors/teachers led as second choices, out-ranking spouses, fathers, and mothers. The frequency of "friend" as a choice increased dramatically from the first list as did "other relatives."

Professors/teachers retained first position in the list of third choices. Friends and spouses and others were very close. Employers/supervisors were consistent choices throughout the list, never exceeding a frequency of 15 (5%).

Table 7

Persons Who Provided Encouragement to Finnish Women In Order of Choice

Person Named	First choice	Second choice	Third choice	Total
Mother	35	34	12	81
Father	44	30	12	86
Parents	19	8	4	31
Other relatives	3	12	18	33
Spouse	53	35	23	111
Children	2	6	13	21
Family	2	0	2	4
Friends	8	22	24	54
Professors/teachers	37	38	37	112
Employers/supervisors	14	15	13	42
Colleagues	14	30	20	64
Others	8	8	23	39
Self	11	1	3	15
No Response	30	41	76	147

Note: n = 280

The totals overall for the three choices show that professors/teachers and spouses are the main encouragers of Finnish women. The category of "parents" again somewhat complicates the specific selections of mothers and fathers. Even without including that category, fathers and mothers are very high. Children, other relatives, and others do not rank highly, nor do references to the self.

Comparing the Samples

Some comparisons were made after the responses were recoded into categories depending on whether the reference was to the self or to persons who were part of the family of origin, the present family, school personnel, leaders at work, colleagues or others. Valid percentages were calculated of the total number of responses by eliminating the non-responses. The valid percentages for the choices of the respondents from the two settings are compared in Table 8. The mentors and role models listed by the Canadian respondents were included in the "other" category because this terminology was not used by the Finns.

Table 8

Valid Percentages of People Who Encouraged Eminent Women from the Two Countries

	Canadian			Finnish		
	First choice	Second choice	Third choice	First choice	Second choice	Third choice
Family of origin	47.4	30.8	19.5	32.8	31.8	20.6
Present family	20.9	16.2	18.7	22.8	17.2	18.6
Friends	4.4	13.4	18.0	3.2	9.2	11.8
Leaders at work	7.8	9.9	9.7	13.2	9.6	8.3
School personnel	9.5	16.3	16.6	14.8	15.9	18.1
Colleagues	2.0	7.2	9.5	5.6	12.6	9.8
Self	4.9	1.6	1.6	4.4	0.4	1.5
Others	3.0	4.7	6.5	3.2	3.3	11.3

These results must be discussed with some caution because the women did not use the same terminology in naming the people who encouraged them. There seems to be a similarity in the patterns of the valid responses for the women of the two countries. All choices for both

contexts are most commonly a member of the family of origin. Members of the present family were chosen next most often by women from both contexts. Friends and school personnel increase in popularity by the third choice for both samples. The importance of encouragement by the parents and other family members for a girl is demonstrated by these results.

Survey Question 3

List, beginning with the most significant, three barriers which you faced in attempting to attain your career goals.

The respondents were asked to list three barriers to their career development, in order. The first choice barrier can be interpreted as being the one that was the most important problem faced by the respondent in her attainment of her career goals, with the second barrier as next important. The third choice is, then, the least important barrier.

Results for the Canadian Sample

The Canadians' responses were categorized according to content. Five overall categories emerged: personal factors, family factors, discrimination, life circumstances, and the barriers in work, education, and profession. While over 87% of the respondents named at least one barrier, nearly half of the respondents did not supply a third choice. The data are summarized in Table 9.

Personal factors were subdivided into personality and relational factors. Personality factors included self-doubts, fears, and unrealistic expectations. Relational factors referred to being impatient or shy around others, lacking political sophistication, or lacking support from others. Family factors were analyzed as emanating either from the family of origin or from the woman's present family. Barriers in the family of origin concerned relationships, upbringing, attitudes in the home, and family status in the community. Child care arrangements, family responsibilities, location of husband's work, and role conflicts were categorized as barriers related to the present family. Discrimination was subdivided into general discriminatory attitudes and specific career-related forms of discrimination. General discriminatory attitudes included chauvinism, sexism,

and stereotyping. Career-related discrimination involved corporate politics, being overlooked for promotions, being female in a male-dominated environment, and lacking role models. Life circumstances such as age, immigrant status, nationality, religion, financial standing or marital status were also named as barriers. Work, educational or profession-related barriers included choice of profession, job opportunities, job security, lack of facilities, examinations, and supervisory decisions in the school or work place.

Table 9

Number and Percentage of Various Barriers to Career Goals as Listed by Canadians

	First barrier	Second barrier	Third barrier	Total
Personal/personality	119	92	106	317
	(14.4%)	(11.1%)	(12.8%)	(12.8%)
Personal/relational	11	14	17	42
	(1.3%)	(1.7%)	(2.1%)	(1.7%)
Family of Origin	34	34	10	78
	(4.1%)	(4.1%)	(1.2%)	(3.1%)
Own family	114	122	79	315
	(13.8%)	(14.8%)	(9.5%)	(12.7%)
Discrimination - attitudinal	173	120	78	371
	(20.9%)	(14.5%)	(9.4%)	(15.0%)
Discrimination - career related	67	57	47	171
	(8.1%)	(6.9%)	(5.7%)	(6.9%)
Work, education, or profession-related	100	80	72	252
	(12.1%)	(9.7%)	(8.7%)	(10.1%)
Life circumstances	103	89	55	247
	(12.5%)	(10.8%)	(6.7%)	(10.0%)
Non-Response	106	219	363	688
	(12.8%)	(26.5%)	(43.9%)	(27.7%)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The barrier category of first choice for over 20% of the women was the general attitudes of discrimination. The next most common barrier was the personal/personality factors with about six percent less. Personal/personality factors, own family, life circumstances and work, education, and professional barriers had similar frequencies for the first barriers listed.

The list of second choice barriers faced is led by the woman's own family (14.8%) and general attitudes of discrimination (14.5%). Aspects of their own personality were named as the most common third choice.

Results for the Finnish Sample

The Finnish responses were translated in Finland and categorized according to content. The themes that emerged for the Finnish responses included personal attributes, health or physical disability, lack of resources, other people, and general attitudes. The barriers listed by the Finns are summarized in Table 10.

Personal barriers to career development included aspects of their own personality and self such as their age, attitudes, skills or abilities. Health problems and physical disabilities were another category of response. Lack of resources were listed as barriers and these were usually lack of time or finances to pursue their goals. Other people provided barriers including their own families and people at work. Sexism and political and ideological attitudes were combined into another category of barriers labelled "general attitudes."

Table 10

Numbers and Percentage of Barriers to Career Goals as Listed by the Finns

	First barrier	Second barrier	Third barrier	Total
Personal	28	34	33	95
	(10.0%)	(12.1%)	(11.8%)	(11.3%)
Health/physical disability	3	6	5	14
	(1.1%)	(2.1%)	(1.8%)	(1.7%)
Lack of money or time	55	37	40	132
	(19.6%)	(13.2%)	(14.3%)	(15.7%)
Other people	79	66	33	178
	(28.2%)	(23.6%)	(11.8%)	(21.2%)
General attitudes	40	41	33	114
	(14.3%)	(14.6%)	(11.8%)	(13.6%)
Non-Response	75	96	136	307
	(26.8%)	(34.3%)	(48.6%)	(36.5%)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Most of the Finnish women named barriers to their career development. However, the proportion of women who did not provide an answer to this question is of interest. Only about three quarters of the respondents listed even one barrier. About half of the women had less than three barriers to list.

The category called "Other people" was the most common response in the first and second choices. People mentioned included spouses and children as well as people at work, both bosses and colleagues. The third barrier most commonly named pertained to a lack of economic or temporal resources. The last column contains the totals for each category. Overall, other people provided the main barriers reported by Finnish women. Lack of money or time were cited slightly more often than general attitudes. Some women (11.3%) cited aspects about

themselves as being the main deterrents. Very few (1.7%) blamed a health problem or physical disability.

Comparing the Samples

An interesting result for this question is to compare the percentage of respondents who did not answer this question. Finns did not supply as many responses as did the Canadian sample. Less than three-quarters of them listed one barrier; in contrast nearly 90% of Canadians listed one barrier. Similarly, however, for both samples the proportion who listed a third barrier was only slightly more than half.

An attempt to compare the two samples of women from the two contexts can be made; however, the results must be interpreted with caution because the women did not use the same terminology to describe those factors that served to impede their career development. Both Canadians and Finns referred to stereotypical attitudes in the society as interfering with their career development. What the Canadians referred to as the discrimination category could be equated with the general attitudes factor in the Finnish study. In addition, both sample sets described personal factors such as personality, relationship problems, and low self-concept as barriers. What the Finns called "Health" and "Lack of Money and Time" could be compared to the "Life Circumstances" category of the Canadians. Other people mentioned by the Finns could be compared to the family members and the work, education, and professional barriers mentioned by the Canadians.

Canadians reported more barriers related to personal factors, other people, and general attitudes. The Finns reported more barriers related to life circumstances such as ill health, being disabled, or lacking monetary or temporal resources. The largest difference seems to appear in the percentage of reported barriers occurring in the general attitudes category. The Canadians reported from three to fifteen percent more of these types of barriers in the three choices and about eight percent more overall in the totals.

Survey Question 4

Are any of the three still barriers? ____ yes _____ no.

If yes, which one(s)? _____ a) _____ b) _____ c)

Results for the Canadian Sample

One hundred and five Canadian women (12.7%) did not answer this question. Of the 722 Canadian eminent women who responded to the first part of the question, 57.3% reported that some barriers persist while 42.7% indicated that their former barriers did not persist. Of those who cited one of their previous barriers, 287 pointed to their first barrier, 236 named their second barrier, and 197 indicated their third barrier still existed.

Results for the Finnish Sample

The proportion of women who answered the question about their barriers still being present was 78.6%. Of the 220 who responded, only 114 (51.8%) stated "yes". Sixty-two women indicated that two or more of the barriers were still present, and 52 listed one of their original barriers as still present. Of those reporting the persistence of only one barrier, 17 pointed out their first barrier, 16 still faced the second barrier, and 19 still faced the barrier they had listed as third.

Comparing the Two Samples

The Canadians answered this question more readily and more of them indicated that barriers continue to face them in their careers. About 13% of Canadians and 20% of Finns did not respond to this question. These results are consistent with the results of the Question 3 in which more than 12% of the Canadian sample did not report a barrier compared to over 26% of the Finns.

An interesting comparison can be made of the proportions of those who answered "yes" out of the total number of respondents from each country. Only about 41% of the total Finnish sample answered this question in the affirmative while 50% of total Canadian sample answered positively.

Survey Question 5

To what do you attribute your success? Please rank order the following with (1) indicating the most significant.

_____ education
_____ personality (e.g., determination)
_____ help or support from others
_____ hard work
_____ superior ability
_____ luck
_____ other (Specify): _____

Subjects were required to rank order these large categories of possible facilitators using numbers to indicate their relative significance. For this question the mean for each category of factor was calculated for each sample set. The means represented the averages of the rankings that the respondents in each national group had attributed to that factor. In this question, the higher the mean of a variable, the lower it is in importance to career success. Statistical analysis using t-tests for independent samples of the participants based on country was performed for each of the these six categories of factors (See Table 11).

Table 11

Analysis of Variance for Categories of Facilitative Factors

Category of Factor	Number of Cases	Mean	Standard Deviation	SE of Mean	t-value
Education					
Canadian	686	3.35	1.56	.059	3.57*
Finnish	205	2.91	1.62	.113	
Personality					
Canadian	714	2.10	1.20	.045	1.22
Finnish	228	1.98	1.25	.083	
Support of Others					
Canadian	657	4.08	1.33	.052	.08
Finnish	196	4.07	1.66	.119	
Hard Work					
Canadian	701	2.45	1.28	.048	.89
Finnish	226	2.37	1.24	.082	
Superior ability					
Canadian	617	3.46	1.62	.065	6.53*
Finnish	215	2.64	1.48	.101	
Luck					
Canadian	576	4.97	1.32	.055	4.78*
Finnish	186	4.31	1.74	.128	

Note: * p<.001
Total possible for the Canadians - 827
Total possible for the Finns - 280

Once again the Finns and the Canadians surveyed ranked these categories of factors in a similar way. Both groups ranked their own personality first, followed by hard work. The education factor was third for the Canadians and fourth for the Finns. Superior ability preceded education for the Finns. The support of others and the aspect of luck were the last two facilitating categories.

There was no significant difference between the Canadian and Finnish participants for hard work, the help and support of others, and personality factors. However, there were significant differences for education, luck, and superior abilities. The means for the Finnish women were higher than those for the Canadians for all three of these categories of response. The means for the two samples varied by enough on these three categories that the t-tests for independent samples were significant at the .001 level.

Conclusion

This study focussed on the retrospective perceptions of eminent women of the factors in their lives that served to assist their career development and contribute to their high level of achievement as well as barriers they had to overcome. The data collection consisted of five questions on a survey of women in high positions in Canada and in Finland. In the Results section of this chapter, the findings for each question were presented separately by country, followed by a comparison of the results for the two samples. In this section, the main findings from each of the questions are summarized and discussed individually and in combination, focussing on the similarities and differences among the two samples. The factors found to be the most important facilitators of career success are considered in relation to the available literature. Limitations to the study and recommendations for further research are also presented.

First, the participants were asked to rate what part was played in their lives by twenty-seven factors relating to personal characteristics, family members, school and work personnel, plus conditions at educational institutions and in the workplace. In recalling their past, the eminent women surveyed reported that their own qualities and personal conviction were the primary reasons they attained prominence or fame. Both Finns and Canadians also gave considerable credit to the close members of their families. Spouses and parents were reported as supplying much encouragement and support. Most of the other influences from the school or workplace were rated as irrelevant in their career development. There were some negative responses for all 27 variables with a few women from each culture ascribing to them a deterring role in their career

development. The variable considered most deterring by both the Canadians and the Finns was the stereotypical attitudes of others.

Despite the similarity of response between the two samples, that resemblance was mainly limited to being a pattern of response. The modes indicated differences in the importance of success in high school and post-secondary institutions as well as in the availability of child care. Further analysis of the results revealed that there were significant differences in the means of the two groups for 6 of the 27 variables. Canadians reported less facilitation or more deterrence than Finns from availability of funding, family connections, availability of child care, and flexibility of time schedules at school. Finns reported more deterrence or less facilitation from colleagues, and success in high school.

Factor analysis of the two matrices of results for Question 1 failed to converge. The differences in the factor analysis were a result of the differences in the pattern of correlations among the variables. For the five-factor model two variables had very low item congruences and these were spouse and availability of funds. The lowest item congruence coefficients for the four-factor model were the stereotypical attitudes of others, school counsellors and availability of funds.

In response to a second question, the women listed the three people who encouraged them in pursuit of their career goals. Canadians reported that the people who provided the most encouragement were their spouses, mothers and fathers, followed by friends. Finnish professors and spouses provided the most encouragement for the Finnish sample, followed by the fathers and mothers. Other family members, such as grandparents and siblings, were largely irrelevant for both samples.

The third question asked them to provide three barriers they faced in their career development. The responses to this question indicated that Finns were less likely to list barriers to their careers. The barriers listed by the Finns were usually other people in various positions. Discriminatory attitudes were most often provided by the Canadians. It would seem that the two groups have had different types of barriers to cope with in their career development. The

Canadians reported the external and socio-cultural barriers reported in the literature (Reis & Dobyns, 1991). Interpersonal factors comprise the barriers that beset the Finns.

In the fourth question the responding eminent women were asked about the persistence of these barriers. Only 722 Canadians and 220 Finnish women responded to this question. From both countries slightly more than half of those who answered the question felt that the barriers still existed for them.

The last question asked participants to rank order the importance of education, personality, help or support from others, superior ability, luck or another factor. Women from both countries ranked personality and hard work as the two most important contributors to their success. Even though the rank order of the categories of response were similar, there were significant differences among the means for the two samples for three of the six categories.

A synthesis of the results of all these questions provides firm support for the conclusion that the most salient factor in success for women in both countries is their own personality. This was shown in the results for both Questions 1 and 5 as well as in the comments. In the comments, the participants referred to their own self-confidence carrying them through and to their desire to make a contribution. The high rating of their own qualities does not mean eminent women lack humility or appreciation for others in their lives. Instead, self-attribution demonstrates how much strength, determination, adaptability and drive it takes to get to the top. In addition, it is an indication of the high level of their self-esteem.

Personality is influential in how persons think about themselves and how they interact with others. Personal aspects such as motivation, perseverance and other qualities have been made part of the recent theories of giftedness and models of eminence (Arnold et al., 1996; Feldhusen, 1985; Reis, 1995: Renzulli, 1986; Sternberg & Davidson, 1986). Albert (1994) stated, "Furthermore, most eminent persons, regardless of their field of interest, are similar to one another in the focus of their motivations, inordinate work drive, orientation towards locating and solving difficult problems, values they honor and express through their work, and probably as important as anything else in their motivation to maintain their identities as creative persons"

(p. 284). Recognition of the importance of personal qualities means that much more research must be made into the characteristics that predispose fulfillment of potential.

The role of others in the career development of women is indicated by the results of Questions 1 and 2. The importance of the immediate family is demonstrated by the results from both Canada and Finland. These women had the support and encouragement of their parents when they were girls and their husbands as adult women. The role of family members is important from a developmental point of view. Parents possibly supported them in their pursuit of higher education and in valuing the talents and abilities shown by their daughters (Yewchuk & Schlosser, 1995). Spouses would have been able to assist these women with the household responsibilities as well as encourage and support their career responsibilities.

The importance of the family of origin has been pointed out by theorists. The proportion of women in this study who stress the role of their parents in their success serves to support this previous research. Albert (1980) has studied the family experiences of eminent men and found that they hold a "special" place and role within the family. Marjoribanks (1979) believed that the personality of parents provides external pressure on the child to achieve, an element that links the presses of the family to the traits and motivations of the creative person. In his later longitudinal study of gifted boys, Albert (1994) found that much of their early ego development, creative potential, and personality changes were related to those of their parents.

The differences noticed among the two sample sets in response to the questions provide some interesting contrasts. Canadians report more barriers to success. The means for some of the variables listed in Questions 1 and 5 were significantly different. Questions must be answered about how real these differences are. Are the differences statistically significant, yet not of practical importance? Are they an artifact of different levels of awareness or are there actual differences in the status of women in society? The history of Finnish women's movement suggests that there are fewer barriers in Finland and the indices published by the United Nations indicate that cross-national differences are a reality.

Some explanations for the differences are readily apparent, especially those emanating from obvious societal differences. Funding for higher education has been less expensive in Finland for decades and education is deemed necessary for both sexes. Finnish women have a tradition of work experience and success in the workplace. It is well accepted throughout Finnish society that women must have jobs and careers. At the present time, most of the women work and only a few of them work part-time. Child care arrangements and financial assistance are in place to assist Finnish women with higher education and working outside the home. Student loans in Finland that need to be paid back are at a low rate of interest. Funding for higher education has not been as readily available in Canada. Time scheduling in Canadian schools and workplaces has not typically been flexible. In Canada, where the importance of career education for girls was questioned until the last generation, funding was largely up to the families or the girl's own earnings.

Children may have been rated as more of a deterrent to career development in Canada because of a lack of services to assist mothers with child care and home health care. Children were viewed as less of a barrier in Finland. The availability of child care was rated as being highly facilitative by the Finnish sample. In Finland every child is guaranteed a place in the government-funded day care centres that are located throughout Finland, both in the cities and in the country. Family connections and work experience did not facilitate career advancement in Canada although they contributed in Finland. Family connections may not have as much effect for Canadians because Canada is a relatively young nation with more opportunities as expansion takes place.

Although more research is necessary into the differences among women from the two cultures, part of the explanation could be on how the two samples perceive the implications of being female. There was a difference in how the two groups reported this variable in the first question. Importantly, the difference was not in the proportion who reported it as irrelevant, but that nearly 35% of Finns saw being female as being facilitative compared to 32% of Canadians who categorized it as a deterrent. In the final solution of the factor analysis, Canadians had an

additional factor consisting of the being female and the stereotypical attitudes of others. Being female is definitely viewed as a barrier to Canadian eminent women. In the final solution for the Finnish factor analysis, "being female" was associated with members of the family of origin and children. It would seem that Finns did not associate being female with the stereotyping of others, but with being a daughter and a mother. The connotation of being a female was different in the two societies.

Other differences are not as obvious; some speculation for the differences can be made. Success in high school and in post-secondary institutions is difficult to compare because the educational systems are so different. Because Finnish women are highly educated they may have not felt that success in high school was as important as their later success in post-secondary education. Colleagues in the workplace would probably be more apt to be women for the Finns because of the way the professions and work sectors are divided. Men typically produce, handle and transport equipment while women serve, take care of, and educate people. Women most commonly work in the public sector; whereas, men are usually employed in the private sector. The rating of Finnish colleagues may reflect the competition among the women for the higher positions. Much more research in each of these areas is necessary in order to ascertain the true reasons for the differences between the two sample sets.

Several limitations to the study are acknowledged, each of which suggest avenues for future research. The Who's Who of Canadian Women was a convenient source for potential respondents, but not all of the eminent women in Canada were necessarily listed there. Furthermore, since the questionnaire was written in English, French-speaking women may not be adequately represented in the final Canadian sample. The questionnaire attempted to identify the main factors that affect achievement, but the factors named did not provide a complete list. Other research topics such as the role of mentors and the issue of self-employment derive from the comments of the women in this study.

There has been some recognition among scholars that different beginnings might be conducive to the production of eminence in different fields of endeavor. The women surveyed

were eminent in many different fields including politics, academia, athletics, art, drama, music, television, and science. The findings did not distinguish among the women according to their fields. Further study is required pursuing this line of questioning.

Eminent women are highly unique. Eminence is not achieved through conventional thinking and problem-solving. What this part of the study describes is the typical high achiever in the two cultures. Interviews with prominent women are needed to complement the findings, to provide the detail, and tell the stories of the individuals behind the statistics. More study of eminent women in various nations offers an inviting area for future research with many implications for theory and practice.

Retrospective studies, although often the only method possible in the study of a group such as eminent persons, have been criticized because of their lack of control and randomness. Using samples matched according to selection and demographic variables, my intention was to overcome some of the difficulties attributed to single group studies. Nevertheless, there were some differences that emerged between the two samples, most notably the age differences. In describing a cross-cultural study, Kerlinger (1967) states " In good ex post facto educational research existing differences in environment are often deliberately selected to test theoretical and practical hypotheses" (p. 368).

Some conclusions are clearly indicated by the findings of this study. The present understanding of being gifted and talented is much broader than the traditional view that emphasized obtaining a high score on a intelligence test. In the past, educators have focussed their research on intelligence. As we have become aware of the multiplicity of intelligences, the general perception of giftedness has expanded to encompass various components (Sternberg & Davidson, 1986). The personal components and the influence of the family members are highlighted by these results. The findings in this paper also suggest that personality factors and family support should be more important than high ability in a model of female eminence.

Samples from both Canada and Finland illustrated the same pattern of response to the questions that referred to facilitation. Rank order of the answers to Questions 1 and 5 were

nearly identical. The parallels among the responses for the two countries suggest that personal and family factors are of similar significance to female talent development across nations. In order to attain eminence a woman needs strong personal convictions and qualities. Family support is also a necessary component. The importance of early experiences of success are pointed out. Previous success provides the thrill of doing well and the distinction based on achievement. These results would seem to indicate that there is a similarity in the experience of eminence among highly achieving women, regardless of whether they are living and working in Canada or in Finland. Women always have responsibilities related to family that have an impact on career and these are universal obligations.

The differences between the two sets of responses may be due to the different traditions, opportunities, and services in the two contexts; but for the most part, these were not deemed relevant to the career development of the participants surveyed. The downplaying of societal factors may be good news for educators and parents searching for answers in promoting fulfillment of potential in girls. Attitudes and conditions in society are not easily changed. Understanding the characteristics that need to be developed in gifted girls will simplify their work.

Several implications for girls arise from the findings of this study. Some of the patterns and trends may be useful to educators struggling with the identification of girls with high potential, and with the promotion of talent development. Girls require the desire to contribute to society in ways other than the traditional roles of wives and mothers. These respondents had the support of others; however, it was their own drive, ambition and other qualities that made the difference.

At this time, with the beginning of twenty-first century on the horizon, the legal barriers for advancement of women are gone. Even though certain stereotypes remain, the outlook for female participation in top level positions is bright. This study demonstrates the importance of personal characteristics and the supporting role of others. Most of these respondents believed that their own convictions and qualities were the deciding factors in their career advancement. Women's eminence would be facilitated by changes in stereotypes and greater availability of funding and child care; however, the crucial factors remain the personal and familial ones.

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Chapter 4 Experiences Eminent Finnish Women Link with Success

The link between giftedness in children and eminence in adulthood is largely unexplained, especially as it pertains to women. There have been few studies of female eminence because women rarely achieve that status and because American feminist work has not typically included studies of female achievement. Preparation of girls for their future roles in industrialized societies is a complex and enigmatic problem which must consider both career development as well as family responsibilities. The rationale for this study is that an understanding of the contributory factors in the lives of prominent women can provide valuable information useful in the education and counselling of gifted girls.

Recent publications from the Nordic countries and in particular from Finland report with pride the relative prominence of women in their society. The levels of participation of females in Finnish political, medical, educational, and artistic fields have exceeded those of nearly every other country in the world. The factors within modern society that allow women to succeed are explored in this paper by providing the life stories of highly successful contemporary Finnish women. The research question was: What are the propitious factors that link exceptional potential in girls to eminence in women? This same question was researched using quantitative methods in the first study; in this study it was investigated phenomenologically with narrative analysis.

Background Information

Finland has always been a pioneer in women's initiatives. In 1906 it became the first country in Europe to grant political rights to women. Finnish women voted for the first time in the 1907 parliamentary elections and elected 19 women at that time. Women have traditionally been very active politically and socially (Hallsten, 1933). They have always taken a strong role in the workplace, the literature and arts, as well as in Finnish politics, as the builders of the welfare state (Manninen & Setälä, 1990).

Rights of women are deeply rooted in the history and literature of Finland. Reforms for women began in the late 1800s when women's groups and unions were organized. About that same time author and playwright Minna Canth presented the powerless plight of the woman within marriage and pushed for women's rights (Heikkilä, 1987). By 1884, 25% of women in Finland were members of both a women's group and a workers' group (Lindström-Best, 1988).

In contemporary Finland, women continue to participate fully in all aspects of life and excel in many of their endeavours. In 1990, 39% of the parliamentary seats in Finland were held by women. Many of the top positions in government have been held by women including the Speaker of the House, the Minister of Defense, and the Governor of the Bank of Finland. At present, the majority of the physicians in the country are female.

Today, Finland is one of the top-ranking countries in the gender-related indices because gender equality and women's empowerment are part of a conscious national policy (United Nations Development Programme, 1995). Finland's progress in education, with women having higher enrollment ratios than men, and the gains women have made in closing the gender gap in earned income, contribute to its high standing. Finland was chosen for inclusion in this study because of its history of female participation in the workforce and its reputation for gender equality. In addition, I was able to acquire information about eminent Finnish women from the internet and obtain the assistance of a personal friend as an interpreter.

The study of eminent persons is difficult because they are, by definition, exceptional and outstanding individuals. The study of exceptionality may be better suited to the qualitative research paradigm because of the uniqueness of the participants and the idiosyncratic nature of their experiences. This study of the needs of gifted girls fits well into the qualitative paradigm because of the multiple perspectives on the research question and complexities of the issues involved. The qualitative method for this research question allows for the experiential part of the lives of eminent women to be studied retrospectively and analyzed for interpersonal authenticity. In researching this question, I wanted to be very close to the data and I wanted to be in a working relationship with my participants. In addition, I was aware that the uniqueness of an international

study might lead me in many unforeseen and unplanned directions. The qualitative paradigm would permit the necessary flexibility.

Narrative inquiry, which is based on phenomenology, is concerned with the personal histories of participants embedded within the social context (Connelly & Clandinin, 1986). The narrative approach seemed to provide the best fit to the purpose of the study, because of its emphasis on the personal aspect of knowledge and the interpersonal reconstruction of the meaning of the experience. The social context for this study includes the family, the school, and the workplace as well as Finnish society as a whole. These eminent women experienced their schooling and career development many years or even many decades ago. Part of the importance of their early experiences hinges on the later parts of their lives during which they achieved peer recognition, success and fame in their fields of endeavour. This project had a historical approach in that it involved the reconstruction of the events in the lives of the participants and their cooperation with my efforts to develop a philosophy relating to the needs of gifted girls.

The interview used the method of open-ended questions so that the participants were encouraged to retell their recollections of being gifted children within their cultural setting. The questions were designed to stimulate them to think about how giftedness and their experiences may have resulted in their subsequent high level of achievement. Part of my intention as the researcher was to ascertain each participant's personal philosophy of the role that her family, school, jobs, and other people played through her stories of the past. I also wanted to find out directly from the participant which factors she would acknowledge herself as being the most significant contributors to her current level of success.

Bracketing

Bracketing of my beliefs and my subjectivity relative to the study was necessary because of my personal high level of interest in the topic and my prior research in the field. Bracketing is the primary means of reducing researcher influence on the participants and to do so I needed to increase my self-awareness through introspection and reflection. Before the data collection

began in earnest, I asked myself questions about my own beliefs and the reasons behind the choice of the topic. I have taken steps to guard against my biases and to look for sensitizors by recording my thoughts, feelings, plans, and reflections in a journal.

This study was based on two working assumptions. First of all, I believe that we can learn about the needs of gifted girls from women who have attained success. At the same time I am concerned that our societal context is not conducive to the facilitation of career success. Fearful that feminist work has overgeneralized the American and Canadian situation, blurring the issues related to the context, I hoped that we could learn from a study of another country. Canadian educators should be able to learn from the experience of women in a society with a conscious and working gender equality policy such as Finland.

The first step in bracketing involved examination of my reasons for doing the study. Researching the needs of gifted girls in education is a subject in which I have been interested for a long time. I have been disturbed by how often girls become disenchanted with academia and enthralled with developing the body image or social life that has been associated with femininity in our society like being beautiful and popular. My point of view is that changes in attitudes in the homes and schools could improve the present situation in which females continue to underachieve.

Each of the areas of my past experience that might have an influence on this study was confronted and considered. My supervisory experience of practicing teachers provided me with considerable practice using the techniques of observation and interviewing. As a former elementary school teacher and mother of three children, I have prior experience in the substantive area of research. My recent experience in writing a master's thesis on the family backgrounds of eminent women was one of the impetuses for this work. Writing for the provincial government and doing research for the local school board have provided me with insights into the educational bureaucracy. Care was taken to avoid making expectations for this project based on my previous research. To do this I reviewed my rationale for each step, making sure that I had not tried to generalize from the Canadian sample to the Finnish group.

My experience as a teacher provided me with certain notions of the needs of gifted girls. I saw them avoid letting others know about their abilities in order to be socially accepted in the peer group. Acknowledging my beliefs related to the issues meant confronting both explicit information as well as tacit knowledge. I accomplished this by expressing my thoughts in a journal, reflecting on them, and tracking gains in my understanding, as envisioned by Schön (1988).

I am aware that my level of theoretical and practical knowledge affected this project. The literature that I have reviewed pertained to the family backgrounds of eminent women and the psychology of giftedness. Knowledge of the theories of others would necessarily affect my research, but I wanted the effect of that knowledge to be a positive and not a limiting factor in the study. I tried to accomplish this by using that prior knowledge as a basis for asking questions rather than providing explanation. A further consideration was that this knowledge of the literature or my previous experience not be allowed in any way to limit my questions.

Constant self-awareness was necessary throughout the data collection. The prominent women interviewed were unaware of my previous studies or publications. Our lack of knowledge of each other meant that the progress of this single recorded session depended on early establishment of rapport. After some reflections on the question of who I am and how others would respond to that query, I considered the repercussions of my personal characteristics on the observation and interview. I was accompanied by my husband and Pirkko Karvonen, a friend who is fluent in the Finnish language. Each day, as we entered into the offices of eminent women, I was aware of the attention we were drawing as foreign visitors. Part of the project involved the observation of a kindergarten in Turku and a university class in Helsinki. We also toured many of the public buildings in Helsinki with a group of university students. My intention was always to appear friendly, but professional. Most of the time I felt like an ambassador for Canada. I was aware not only of my own presumptions but also of my intrusions on those working in these facilities.

One of my main considerations in the analysis of the data involved introspective search of my own biases and feelings about the subject. I had come to Finland perplexed about Canadian attitudes towards successful women, looking for cultural differences and believing that these would account for the participation differences between the two countries. I had to make certain that these preconceptions did not color my analysis of the participants' words. In the bracketing stage of this analysis the data were considered in isolation from everything else. The codes were entered into the computer and they were all treated with equal value, or "horizontalized," as suggested by Patton (1990). The data were then organized into clusters for each participant. To forestall any tendency to interpret their words from my own experiential or theoretical perspective, the paraphrasing and coding of the interview protocol were fully discussed with my peers.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) use the phrase "theoretical sensitivity" to describe the personal qualities of the researcher and provide suggestions as to how these can be used to aid rather than block theory development. Prior knowledge can create theoretical sensitivity, in the form of a heightened awareness of the problems and understandings expressed by the participants; however, to accomplish this, I knew I had to consistently monitor myself throughout all the steps and procedures in the analysis. As I became more immersed in the data, I took care to avoid premature categorization and to seek out alternative explanations. Acknowledging my presuppositions and confronting them in this paper has helped me be reflective during the gathering of the data. Facing the implications of my preconceptions and prior knowledge has made me sensitive to the fact that there were other pertinent areas, of which I might not be consciously aware. Thus, I strived for personal awareness to permeate the complete data analysis, and intentional and deliberate reflection to interfuse the entire research process.

Concerns about Trustworthiness and Rigor

Regardless of the paradigm and the methodology used, research must adhere to high standards. Trustworthiness and rigor are the distinguishing attributes of the coherent and systematic disciplined inquiry involved in qualitative research. These standards are essential and

crucial at every phase of a qualitative study to ensure that the data are believable due to the thoroughness and integrity of the description, and that the reader is provided with complete understanding of the phenomena being studied.

Care was taken at every step of this study to establish credibility. Multiple sources were used to select the participants and every effort was made to obtain written material about the Finnish women selected for this part of the study. As the researcher, I became totally immersed in the data for several months. The search for invariant themes across the data from all the participants was an involved and complicated process. Once the themes were determined, they had to be confirmed and verified. Peer consultation and member checking was used for validation.

Materials were collected that relate to every aspect of the study: the curriculum vitae of the prominent women interviewed, articles written about the status of women in Finland, in general, as well as articles written about the individual participants. All the data were closely monitored for consistency both within the actual source and with the other sources. The transcription was verified for accuracy against the recording and the punctuation was checked as a way of demonstrating the pace, and tone of the conversation. Within the interview and also the observation, evidence of validity was sought by looking for reiteration and consistency. Clarification and illumination was accomplished by further discussion with the participants to eliminate any concerns about the effects of researcher bias on their extraction from the data. I transcribed all the data myself in order to be more familiar with the actual words and their meanings. The transcriptions to be used were sent back to the participants for verification.

Because the various parts of this study involved a number of women, it was essential that a clear decision trail be included to allow the reader to make continuous assessment of the trustworthiness of the data and the findings. In addition to this discussion of the work plan and details of the analysis, an audit trail was maintained. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that the auditability of a study may be the single most important technique for establishing trustworthiness.

Another crucial aspect of the analysis process was to look for alternate ways of organizing the data and alternate explanations for the connections found in the various sources of data. A colleague checked the paraphrasing and data coding. The findings were discussed with an expert in gifted education to ensure that my interpretation of the data did not contain any contradictions or inconsistencies.

Triangulation was achieved through matching the narrative data with the answer to the direct question about facilitation. Document analysis and observation were used to verify the results as well. In a search for the commonalities or universals for the phenomenon of education of gifted girls, the categories that emerged were compared among the data sources. The universals were called the themes. As a final check on the trustworthiness of the findings, I discussed the themes with Finnish-Canadians and some of the participants.

In summary, every effort was made to establish the trustworthiness of this project. As it is described by Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness involves transferability, credibility, dependability, and confirmability. Transferability is demonstrated in the amount of data, in what could be called thick description. Credibility has been attempted by indicating my own background experiences and also by inclusion of peer debriefing, member checking and the maintenance of journals over the extent of the study. The audit trail and completeness of all documentation address the concerns of dependability and confirmability.

Data Collection and Field Issues

Selection of the Interviewees

The first step involved the contact of the Canadians living in the area who were of Finnish descent. I discussed with them the idea for my research. Initial surprise was expressed about my topic, but that was followed by attitudes of cooperation and a high level of interest. I also contacted the Finnish embassy in Canada about the idea. The embassy staff sent me some written material and the names and addresses of prominent female members of the Finnish parliament.

A meeting was set up with a woman from Finland who was traveling through Canada and she volunteered to assist me when she could. Magazine articles and the internet were searched for names of prospective eminent Finnish women. Concerned that there could be some bias to the names that I had found using these sources because they were written in English, the assistance of the Finnish-Canadians was sought once more. Names of three of the interviewees were suggested by them.

The participants were chosen because their career experience was deemed to be representative of highly successful women, yet their backgrounds were diverse enough to supply more information for the study. Letters were sent to nine prominent Finnish women, explaining my research proposal and my wish to interview them about their career development. One letter was returned because of an outdated address. Although no dates and times were set, all of the other eight women readily agreed to be interviewed when I was able to come to Finland. Several of these prominent women referred me to their personal assistants to set up the appointments.

Putting together a workable schedule for eight very busy women in the three week period I wanted to be there was a process in itself. The personal assistants and I e-mailed and faxed back and forth for the last five weeks before I left for Finland as their schedules changed and mine became more structured.

The ready response of the interviewees provided new support for my research topic that I had not expected. That was the first surprise; the next one was that the interviewees in Helsinki wanted me to interview others while I was there. The response of the Finns to the topic was overwhelmingly positive.

Data Collection and the Reflexive Journal

Data collection began as I obtained as much information as possible about each woman before I left for Finland. Finland has a reputation for being a leader on the internet and so I sought write-ups about the most prominent politicians, authors, and artists there. There was information about four of the names chosen for inclusion there. In addition, Finland has many

magazines and I was able to find articles about the same four in publications. An article written in Suomen Silta (1995) about Maija Perho commended her leadership style as being in demand in leading positions in Finland. The women in business and finance were written about in Business Finland 1990 (Ritvos, 1990).

The interview strategy involved an open-ended first question followed by others that were based on verifying the content of what the interviewee meant. The purpose was to understand the perspective of each participant and the guidelines I attempted to follow were those described by Patton (1990). To verify the interview protocol a practice session consisted of the interview of a gifted Canadian woman and in-depth clarification of the issues involved with her. To further address my own background, biases, and beliefs, the interview questions were asked of me by a colleague.

The main data collection consisted of personal interviews with the women, which lasted one hour to ninety minutes. The interviews were conducted over a three week period in October, 1997. Eight women were interviewed in their offices, three in their homes, and one came to the apartment I had rented in Helsinki. The use of the tape recorder was deemed necessary because of the tight time schedule. In the correspondence before the meetings I shared my plans for collecting their stories about their families, schooling, and career development. I also clearly stipulated that as part of those requirements I would have to tape record the exchange. I promised the participants that the recordings would only be used by myself for writing up the project and the pertinent articles.

The first women interviewed showed a very high level of interest in the research question and suggested names of other prominent women who might be available to take part in the study. This proved to be very helpful. With the assistance of Pirkko, appointments were made to interview several women in addition to the ones with whom I had made previous arrangements. An additional four eminent women accepted my invitation to participate in the research. I also met with other researchers, professors, and students who provided important background material and information about career development and gender issues in Finland.

Twelve Finnish women were interviewed. There were three prominent politicians, three business women, three research scientists, and three women involved in the arts. The politicians included the Speaker of the House of Parliament, the Secretary General of one of the opposition parties and the Minister of Defense. The women involved in business included the Governor of the Bank of Finland, the Communications Officer of a government department, and the Manager of Finnish Information Services. One of the research scientists looked after the government services to the hospitals in Finland, one worked for a large corporation, and one of them headed up her own research project. Those involved in the arts included an author, a designer, and the manager of an orchestra. The following list provides the names and positions of the participants.

List of participants

Sirkka Hämäläinen is the Governor of the Bank of Finland and Chairperson of the Board of Directors. Many times during her distinguished career in banking, Dr. Hämäläinen became the first female in a position, including the first woman researcher, first female head of the bureau, first female department head, and the first female director. Now she is one of a few female governors in the central banks of Europe, a position she has held since 1992. Sirkka grew up in the Finnish countryside; she was the middle child of three born to a farmer and a teacher. Her educational background includes a DSc in Economics. She is the mother of two children and the grandmother of two.

Kerttu Härkonen is the Director of Corporate Communication for the Forest and Park Service, Finland. Her educational background includes forestry studies in Finland and in Canada with an MSc from both countries. Kerttu grew up in a small village in eastern Finland. She was the oldest child of six born to a forestry foreman and his wife. She is not married.

Helena Hiilivirta is the General Manager of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra which gives over 50 concerts a year, makes foreign and domestic tours, and records for radio and commercial recording companies. In previous employment positions, Ms. Hiilivirta was a cellist in several leading orchestras, taught cello at music institutes, managed the Lahti Sinfonia, and was a music producer for the Finnish Broadcasting Company. Her education in music includes a cello diploma from the Sibelius Academy and a bachelor's degree from the University of Helsinki. Her mother was a teacher and her father was the foreman in an electronics company. She has one brother, three years younger. At present she lives in Helsinki with her husband and son. Her hobby is jogging and she has run marathons in Helsinki and New York City.

Sirpa Jalkanen is in charge of a research laboratory at Bio-City in Turku, Finland. After working as a medical doctor for several years, she obtained her PhD from the University of Turku. Dr. Jalkanen was nominated to be a professor of the Finnish Academy in 1996. In 1997, she was nominated to be a Professor of Immunology at the University of Helsinki. She grew up in a small city in the middle of Finland. Her father worked for a company in the wood industry and her mother worked as a secretary. She was their oldest child with one sister, six years younger. She is married to a biochemist and they have three children, two daughters and a son.

Irma Kukkasjärvi is an artist renowned for her textile designs. Her work beautifies many of the public places in Helsinki and her most auspicious designs are prominent in the House of Parliament and in the President's residence. For the last three years Irma has been a professor teaching art in the University of Art and Design in Helsinki. Her awards and prizes include the Finnish State Award for Crafts and Designs in 1978, the Pro Finlandia Medal in 1985, and the TV Cultural Prize in 1987. Irma was the only child of a welder and a seamstress who made fur coats. At present, she lives in Helsinki with her teenage son.

Maija Perho is the Secretary General of the National Coalition Party (Kansellinen Kokoomus). She has a Master's degree in Political Sciences attained in 1974 from the University of Turku. Her public service record includes being a Member of Parliament, a Member of the City Council of Turku, as well as the Chairperson on numerous boards and organizations. Her accomplishments have meant that she was often a trailblazer for women, often serving as the first female chairperson on committees and organizations. She has one older brother, two younger brothers, and a younger sister. Ms. Perho is married and the mother of two daughters.

Elisabeth Rehn is a Special Rapporteur for the Situation of Human Rights for the United Nations involved currently in missions in Bosnia, Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. She was the youngest of three daughters born to a physician and his wife. Her public service record includes being a Member of the Government of Finland, a Member of Parliament, a member of the European Parliament and on many committees related to the UN, the OSCE, OECD and other organizations. In the Finnish government, she served as the Minister of Defense from 1990 to 1995 and the Minister of Equality Affairs from 1991 to 1995. She was a candidate in the 1994 Finnish election for President. In 1994 the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration honored her with a doctorate in Economic Sciences. The mother of four children and the grandmother of ten, Mrs. Rehn lives with her husband in Kirkkonummi.

Paula Selenius is the Managing Director of Suomi Seura Society (The Finland Society) which is an international organization that represents Finnish expatriates living abroad and has about 50,000 members. Paula was the only child of a close-knit family. After attending a business school and working for a few years, Paula went to university and received her MA in English. Before becoming the first female executive director of the Finland Society, she completed an MBA from the Helsinki School of Economics and spent some time studying in China. She is married and the mother of one teenage daughter.

Kirsti Tiihonen is a research scientist working as a project manager for Cultor, one of the largest corporations in Helsinki involved in food processing. Her educational background consists of a PhD from the University of Helsinki where she studied biosciences. The youngest of eight children, she has five brothers and two sisters. She is married and the mother of a baby boy who was six weeks old at the time of the interview.

Riitta Uosukainen is the Speaker of the House in the Parliament in Finland, a position she has held since 1994. From 1991 to 1994, she was the Minister of Education. Riitta was the middle child in a family of three girls born to a Finnish electrician and his wife. Her educational background includes a Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, and Licentiate in Philosophy. She began teaching at the Imatrankoski Upper Secondary School in 1969. Her political career began when she became a member of Imatra Town Council in 1977. Mrs. Uosukainen has served as a Member of Parliament since 1983. She is married and has one son.

Kaari Utrio is a popular Finnish author, well-known for her historical novels replete with adventure, romance, and humor. She was trained at the University of Helsinki as a research scholar majoring in history. Her books have sold more than 1.8 million copies and have been translated into several languages. One of her chief works, Eve's Daughters: A History of Women, Children and the Family in Europe, has recently come out in Poland. Another major work of six volumes, The History of the European Family, has just been completed. Ms. Utrio has received several awards including the State Prize for Literature, the Book Prize, a prominent German literary prize, and the Pro Finlandia Award. Honors bestowed on her include being named the "Woman of the Year" in 1985 and being appointed the Honorary Arts Professor in 1995. She is married and the mother of three children.

Raija Vainionpää, PhD, is in charge of providing diagnostic services to the Finnish hospitals. In addition, she is a senior lecturer at the University of Turku, responsible for teaching virology for medical students and guiding her PhD students. She was elected vice-chairperson for her department and is one of only two women to serve in that capacity for a medical faculty. Raija and her younger brother were the children of a policeman and a homemaker. She is married to a teacher and they have two sons. They reside in the countryside where they enjoy sailing in the summer and skiing in the winter.

All of the participants were university-educated with at least one degree. Their ages varied from the early thirties to the early sixties. All except one were mothers with from one to four children. All of them were active, vibrant and friendly. Even though there was a possibility of having the interview interpreted for them, all these women were eager to be interviewed in English. They were all highly proficient and articulate in English. Only occasionally was the interpreter called upon to assist us with certain words.

The interview protocols

Many of my meetings began with the participant offering us the traditional coffee and coffee cake, cookies, or rice cakes. Their extension of hospitality set a good tone to our meetings and led to the establishment of early rapport. Because I used the ideas and methods described by Rubin and Rubin (1995), the interviews were similar to guided conversations.

I started out by explaining the rationale for my research and telling them how I got their names. The first questions involved asking them to recall stories about their childhood or babyhood. As they told me about themselves, I sometimes interjected with a question to clarify their meaning, but usually allowed them to continue from tale to tale. I focussed on family of origin, schooling, first jobs, present family, their current position and its responsibilities.

In addition to asking interviewees about stories they remembered about their childhood and their schooling, other questions arose related to their career field. Sometimes questions arose

from write-ups about the interviewees that had been published or were available on the internet. If I had previous information about them or their positions, I was prepared to pose specific questions and was ready to discuss in more depth their career development. I had the opportunity to meet with four of the participants on occasions other than just the interview. The constraint of having only one meeting occurred with some of the women who lived outside of Helsinki or who were extremely busy. This was offset somewhat by having access to literature about them to complement the interview.

An unstructured interview protocol was chosen and every effort was made to let the participants lead in the interviews. After the initial preamble describing my research question and the use of the tape recorder, I tried to keep my questions to a minimum. When there were natural pauses in their stories, I asked about another phase of their lives. Near the end of the interview time I broached direct questions about the societal facilitators in their career field. My final question to each participant was about what they considered to be the most important factors in their lives that led to their personal current career success.

Each day all of my observations, thoughts, and feelings about the interviews were recorded in a book that I call my field diary. No notes were taken during the interview process, but each evening my recollections were added to the diary. I wanted to remain an active participant in the interviews and not be distracted from their speech and facial expressions by looking down at a notepad. This decision was based on the need to attend fully to verbal and also to the non-verbal cues, so important in interviewing someone in what is not their first language.

Keeping a fieldwork journal has been recommended by many research authorities including Bogdan and Biklen (1992), Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Patton (1990). I had started writing in a reflexive journal when the idea for this research came to me and I continued to write in it as I formulated the research proposal and prepared for candidacy. This reflexive journal, which recorded the entire rationale for the project, was too large to take on the airplane. On the trip to Finland, all the ideas and insights, as well as the mistakes and problems were recorded in a coiled notebook that I always carried with me. A daily schedule, itinerary and a record of each day's

activities were also included in my field diary. This diary became a structure for my immediate accounting, containing the procedures used in the data collection. Throughout the study the journal and the field diary were used to acknowledge my own experience and to improve the data collection and analytic process. During data analysis, these books were useful in the establishment of trustworthiness. They were not only a means of providing data about myself as the researcher and the human instrument, but they also provided an audit trail.

Ethical concerns

The proposal for this research was submitted to the Ethics Committee of the Educational Psychology Department at the University. Ethical considerations began with fully informed consent. I felt a primary responsibility to protect the participants in any way they felt was necessary.

All the participants in this study were fully informed of my intentions and also my methods in doing this research project. Every effort was made to gain their trust and every effort will be made to maintain the working relationships based on mutual respect and trust that have developed during the process of data collection.

Before any interviewing took place the women were informed that all their words would go back to them for approval. Interviewees always gave me permission to record our conversation before the interview began. On the day of the interviews I waited for express permission from each of them before I turned the tape recorder on. It was placed in a position between us and each participant was told that at any time that she wanted to pause for a few minutes she was welcome to use the controls herself or ask me to stop the machine. They were also told the recording would be stopped at any time they wished.

The quotations used in this paper were approved by the interviewee who spoke the words. Each participant was given the opportunity to use a pseudonym instead of her own name. Initially, all but two of them wished to have their own names used. In order to be consistent throughout, I went back to the two who were hesitant at first about using their own names, and

asked them again. When I explained how all the others felt about it, these two agreed to let their own names stand as well.

Method and Qualitative Data Analysis

The raw data from each of the main data sources were analyzed separately using the methods described by Strauss and Corbin (1990). As a means to become more involved with the data and in order to understand them better, I did all the transcribing myself. The protocols for the interviews were listened to and read through simultaneously to get a feel for the language and the perspective of the participants. Particular attention was paid to the rate of speech and tone of voice of the woman speaking. The precision of entering in the exact speech as well as the interruptions and expressions of emotion was checked by a second listening. Doing the transcribing and the checking myself provided me with a chance to "relive" the interviews, which was helpful in the development of the themes and in becoming aware of details that may have not been noticed in the actual interview process.

Each transcription was read several times as I worked to explore and clarify the ideas the women were expressing, keeping in mind that they were not using their first language. The main portion of each interview, which consisted of their stories, was analyzed separately from the direct final question about what was the most salient facilitator for them. Meaning units consisting of unities of data, either phrases, sentences, or paragraphs were identified as the basis of analysis. Each verbatim transcript was analyzed according to meaning units. The meaning units were paraphrased and codes or tags were used for labelling them. The codes that labelled the meaning units were added to the transcriptions of the interviews and placed into the Windows version of the Microsoft Word software package.

The next step in the analysis involved clustering the tags according to their content using the appropriate windows. The frequency of each tag was noted and the meaning of each tag was considered as they were put into clusters based on their meanings. This proved to be quite cumbersome because of the number of codes and clusters based on the large number of

interviews and the diversity of the fields in which the participants worked. At this point the peer debriefer checked the coding for accuracy and agreement.

Groups of responses arose from the clusters of data based on the various aspects of their lives that the women addressed in their interviews. The clusters were then organized into contextual groupings that referred to societal, family, personal, and career development factors. The societal factors included those that related to support for women working and educational factors. Family factors included those relating to the family of origin as well as their present families.

Thematic analysis was a long process involving several in-depth readings of the transcriptions and the clusters of codes within the contextual groupings and then within the field of endeavour for the women. Each reading led to revisions to my original thoughts about the meaning and ultimately resulted in a more parsimonious format. Categories of response arose from the clusters for each data source. One of the most useful methodologies for comparison of the categories between the women involved mapping. In order to facilitate the analysis, labels for the clusters were arranged on large sheets of paper. They were color-coded by contextual group and identified with the initials of the data source. Conceptually, the clusters were horizontalized or treated as equally important across the contextual groupings.

The last step of the analysis involved searching for commonalities in the categories across all participants. These commonalities were called themes. Determination of the final themes resulted from a matrix with the categories listed under each data source. The categories that described the clusters were compared to the named facilitators in the final question asked of each participant. Four invariant and universal themes emerged after many hours of analysis of this large data set.

Peer Debriefing

Miles and Huberman (1984) suggested that a support for self-awareness might include a "friendly stranger" in the research program. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest "peer debriefing" to improve credibility and to allow the researcher to test working hypotheses and check the

emerging methodology. A colleague of mine volunteered to assist in this way. At a series of meetings we discussed not only the philosophical basis for my work, but also the details of coding, categorizing, and clustering the data. The peer debriefer was familiar with the research process and was involved in her own study of gifted women. Her knowledge base of both the substantive area of research as well as the methodology made her contributions particularly valuable to the present study.

Peer debriefing sessions were unstructured and sometimes took several hours at a time. We shared our opinions about the role of women in society, probed my preconceptions about what constitutes "success," and confronted my inadequacies and doubts as the work seemed to be overwhelming. The peer debriefing was especially helpful because we often did not agree about gifted women and open honest discussion of the issues provided new incentive to write. One of the earliest discussions with my peer debriefer made me realize that I had a tended to overlook the need for a career in some of the interviews. As a result, I immediately returned to the data and checked to ensure that the participants' reasons for wanting a career were not neglected.

Member Checking and Co-production

Each participant was sent a copy of the interview content that was to be used for her validation. She was asked to change, delete or add to the content in order to make her intentions clear. These transcripts and the ensuing communication about the use of the quotations were sent by e-mail or by postal mail. Most of the women made some changes to their words.

Peer debriefing with a colleague was done twice, once at the beginning of the analysis and then just before the writing process. The data were then integrated into the shared structure presented in the results section. The final stage of the analysis involved triangulation of the main data sources.

Additional information was obtained from other sources that were not initially planned. The materials and information are not formally included here but were used to question the findings

and to further my understandings. During the writing of the project, I met two Finnish professors who were visiting Canada. We enjoyed talking about my trip to Finland and they later sent me some written material about art and design. Conversations with Finnish-Canadians throughout the project served to confirm my findings.

My journal was carefully analyzed for use as an audit trail and to look for the development of the themes. As I read and reread the transcripts, it became clear that there were references to three of the themes in my journal. Many aspects of Finnish culture that we had noticed while we were there suggested its inherent egalitarianism. I remembered how a journalist, on the first day of our visit to Finland, had pointed out the importance of *sisu* (perseverance) in Finnish attitudes and traditions. In my journal entries describing the participants, I had often referred to characteristics indicative of their self-reliance.

Results

The codes or tags that were attached to the meaning units were numerous for all the data sources. They were clustered into categories and the categories for each of the data sources were analyzed. Because of the large numbers of sources, I used what I called "contextual groupings" to help organize the large number of categories. Not only were the narrative data referred to in the analysis, but also the answers the participants supplied to the direct question about what they considered to be salient facilitators were included.

For the categories, refer to Table 12 where they are listed by the appropriate contextual group. The contextual groupings (in bold type) were used only to provide a convenient way of organizing the categories. The frequencies by the categories provide the number of participants to whom they applied, either the narrative part of the interview or in answer to the direct question in which they named the facilitators. For example, the numbers across from "Equality at home" mean that the narrative data for three women provided categories related to equality in their childhood homes, and two women named this category as being very important in their career development when they were asked to name facilitators. The sources for the named facilitators

may or may not have been the same ones who mentioned the categories within their narrative data.

Table 12

Categories Listed According to Contextual Group and Frequency of Interview Sources

	Narrative Data	Named Facilitators
Cultural Aspects		
Equality at home	3	2
Tradition of equality	2	1
Maintaining equality	1	
Tradition of independent career women	2	2
Homemaking is a shared responsibility	1	
Complementary role of men	3	1
Injustice of war	1	
Personal Aspects		
Self-confidence	1	2
Independence	4	3
Self-awareness	2	
Proving oneself	1	
Balance	2	
Spiritual growth	1	
Optimism	1	
Belief in own abilities – trust yourself	2	2
Challenge yourself	2	3
Idealistic	2	
Not afraid	1	
Uncertainty; frustration	2	
Two sides to personality	1	1
Habit of accepting work		1
Determination		2
Ability to overcome obstacles in life	2	1

Aspects of School and Work		
Productivity level		1
Love of work	1	
Pride in work	2	3
Hard work	3	2
Responsibility	3	3
Leadership	1	
Teamwork	1	1
Networking	1	
Setting priorities	1	
Rights of passage	2	1
Early experience in the field	2	
High grades in school	2	3
Didn't make goal	2	2
Focus	1	
Work with hands	1	1
Flexibility	2	
Need for money	2	
Need for power		1
Equality in education for women	3	1
Affordability of education	2	1
Family Members		
Family of Origin		
Support of parents for self-fulfillment	3	4
Mother promotes career for girls	3	3
Special treatment by grandparent	2	
Sibling provides leadership	1	1
Strong female relatives		1
Present Family		
Support of family		1
Husband's assistance	5	3
Needs of children	3	
The importance of being a good mother	4	
Being strong for family		1
Other People		
Help from other people	3	4
Teamwork for excellence	2	2
Supervisors' support of work	2	3
Audience's demands		1
Spoke the language of constituents	1	1
Motivates others	1	1
Friends' assistance		1
Encouragement from others	4	3
Role of helping others	2	

Four themes emerged from the categories. The themes did not come from just one contextual grouping but emerged across two or more of them as shown in Table 13.

Table 13

Summary of the Themes from the Categories within the Contextual Groups

	Personal Aspects	Aspects of School and Work	Cultural Aspects	Family Members	Other People
Self-reliance	X (32)	X (13)	X (4)	X (2)	
Superior performance	X (7)	X (29)			X (12)
Interdependence		X (3)	X (5)	X (19)	X (19)
Egalitarianism		X (7)	X (10)	X (14)	

( ) numbers represent frequencies of categories

Triangulation

Triangulation between the data sources was established using the narratives, the direct question, and in my journals. As demonstrated in Table 14, the four themes were broadly based.

Table 14

Triangulation of the Themes

	Narrative Data	Named Facilitators	Field Diary
Self-reliance	X	X	X
Superior performance	X	X	
Interdependence	X	X	X
Egalitarianism	X	X	X

The Themes

Four universal themes emerged from the integration of the data sources. These themes represented the important factors that led to career success for women concerning personal qualities, excellence of their work, strong relationships with others, and societal opportunities and values. These themes were labelled self-reliance, superior performance, interdependence, and egalitarianism.

The theme labelled here as self-reliance was the strongest theme. Self-reliance means having confidence in and exercising one's own powers or judgment. As it is used here, self-reliance referred to self-awareness of individual characteristics or qualities and the fortitude and self-confidence to take on responsibility in a leadership role. Most participants had thought about who they were and how their own personalities had importance for the level of success they had attained in their work. They had the fortitude or strength of mind to overcome difficulties and face their responsibilities with courage. The term "sisu" in Finnish is applicable for it means perseverance and is a trait valued by the Finns. In English, the term "self-actualization" would be another apt descriptor for many aspects of this theme.

All of the participants also spoke about their work, whether it was in business, arts, research or politics. Some of them spoke about the process they had gone through to get to their present status, either by creating a position for themselves or through long experience in the field. They talked about the quality of their work and how they avoided making mistakes. There was a lot of reference to how hard they worked and how passionate they were about their work. These categories were combined into an overall theme called superior performance.

Another pervasive theme that dominated the narratives of every participant was that of interdependence. The term "interdependence" was used because these women were not dependent on other people, yet they were not independent. Strong connections and relationships were made with others and support flowed both to and from these women to those in contact with them. Family members, professors, and colleagues provided encouragement and support while these women were studying and working in their early positions. Many expressed their appreciation to their coworkers for their success. In turn, these eminent women attempted to assist others in different ways: one was involved with direct aid to war-torn areas for the United Nations, one helped others with career development, and another worked to develop a networking system for female leaders. In addition, all eleven of the mothers spoke about their children and providing proper care for them.

The theme of egalitarianism was not as strong as the other themes in terms of number of categories relating to it. However, it was the background for the women's narratives and the basis for the other themes. Egalitarianism refers to a belief in human equality especially with respect to social, political, and economic rights and privileges. Equality was referred to as the general milieu in which the Finnish participants grew up or worked their way up in their fields. They had experienced equality in the home with their siblings; they had equal opportunities for education and career development, and they felt valued as employees and leaders. Most of these women had travelled, worked or studied in other countries and they had become aware of their country's egalitarianism. They were also aware of their traditions and the results of socialist policies in their society.

I. Self-Reliance

The women described the development of personal characteristics that, in combination with high ability level, fostered adult success. The participants were all strong women who were in control of their lives. They had been good students and were now highly educated. In their interviews and the answers to the direct question they referred to their ability to handle responsibility, their independence, and their perseverance in getting to where they are today. These characteristics were combined with a high level of self-knowledge and self-understanding.

Some of the qualities that these women emphasized as being most important were self-determination, being oneself, being optimistic with a positive attitude to life, and rising to the challenge of finding something new. From their narratives and responses, a universal theme of personal courage and trusting oneself emerged. Learning how to overcome the difficulties in life and being unafraid of failure resulted in individual self-awareness, independence, and the necessary self-confidence to be considered exceptional. What these women were talking about was not just determination, nor was it competition, cooperation, or aggressiveness. The emphasis was on being unafraid, daring to take responsibility, trusting oneself, and being willing to make mistakes.

These women were independent, especially the artists. They had a high level of self-confidence as adults, even if some of them said they were not confident as children. They were determined in their career goals, and they relied on their own abilities to get them through. When all the aspects of the personal qualities required were considered, the theme was labelled self-reliance. Even though 'self-actualization' may have been an appropriate label, it was not used for this study because of possible confusion with the writings of Maslow (1968).

High ability levels and leadership skills.

Although the participants to this study did not often refer to their own high levels of ability, it was very obvious that these exceptional women had above average abilities and skills. They were either academically gifted or artistically talented. In addition, they all demonstrated leadership skills.

These women all had high achievement levels in school prior to their present career achievement levels. Sirpa and Paula talked about how quickly they advanced through their programs in university. Even though they had family responsibilities, they were able to keep pace with their classmates and finish graduate education.

When these participants remembered themselves as children they described exceptional children with characteristics commonly associated with giftedness, like curiosity, perceptiveness, androgyny, and risk-taking. Riitta and Kaari stressed that they were daring, and not afraid like others are. Kerttu and Riitta described themselves as curious children. They both taught themselves to read before they entered school.

Riitta recalls being a good student in school who was involved in all school activities and sports like soccer and gymnastics. "I sewed my clothes and I made everything. I read many books, very much." She described herself as a "boy-girl" who spent much time with her father. "I was very often on the roofs, the trees and so on." "I was such a father's girl."

These women are leaders. Riitta, as Speaker of the House, balances the needs of 200 Members of Parliament. Helena is the manager of an organization with more than 100 people. Irma, Kaari, and Raija serve as professors at the university. Kerttu was invited as a guest-speaker by the people from her village. Kirsti and Sirpa are team leaders at their research laboratory. Paula is the managing director of the Finnish information society. Maija is the secretary-general of her party and her leadership style was the focus of a publication (Hyvönen, 1995). Elisabeth nearly became the President of Finland in the 1994 elections. Sirkka is the Chairperson of the Board of Governors of the Bank of Finland.

Leadership style was one of the things discussed in some of the interviews. Riitta is a leader with the ability to balance the needs of various groups in the decision-making process. Her personality and abilities have propelled her to a position of eminence within the Finnish government. Her narratives acknowledge an understanding and appreciation of the views of others in addition to describing her own personal convictions and qualities. People are drawn to her. Riitta told me about a book she wrote about her life, "I wrote my book, for example, because

I wanted to show to the young ladies." The press picked out some of the parts about sexuality to denounce. "They tried to kill me politically. And I got very good success in polls then after that." "The people came to me and took power from me. I stood there in those local stores and wrote my name in those books, you know, dedicated those books, sort of. There were hundreds of people who came and touched me and took power from me. It was so extraordinary and odd!"

Even though Kirsti is away on maternity leave, she uses an e-mail connection from work to her home to assist her fellow workers with any problems they may be having. "I'm not officially supervising them, but, of course, I am answering if they are asking me something, and I am trying to help, and those people come here and we discuss here how should we proceed." "But I also feel that this is my duty because this work is more what is inside your head. It is not written anywhere, so I think it is important that I share my head with them because I can't write everything and they can't continue my work if I'm not involved in it. But I also want to do that."

Riitta likes to work with groups consisting of both men and women in order to arrive at decisions cooperatively. "One thing I must say here again. I do not prefer this political work among women. I work always in mixed associations. It is much easier to make influence on men when you are working with them and not so that you are behind the corner." "I never let people speak badly about men." "We must honor each other and trust each other."

Self-awareness.

All the interviewees but one indicated how much thought they had given to their own characteristics and the role these qualities played in their life stories. Some of them only told me they knew their strengths and weaknesses, but others shared with me what these specific traits were. Riitta attributed her success to her personality. Both Riitta and Kerttu expressed their individualism. Maija was in the habit of saying yes whenever she was asked to take on more work, but she also knew her abilities, and her limitations. The words of Kerttu, Helena, and Kaari expressed a high level of self-knowledge.

Maija described how well she knew her own personality and her abilities: "I am very self-conscious also about my good sides and my bad sides. I know what are the weaknesses and

what are the strengths." "I have two sides. I can still be shy in certain situations. I am quite divided. I have heard also nowadays some are saying to me 'Oh, you are somehow so shy' and the other person evaluates me quite different."

Kerttu, too, had reflected on her own abilities and potentials. "I have had to do a lot of thinking. It hasn't been easy. I'm getting more positive all the time. It all sort of makes more sense. I've had agonies and I've had very difficult times. But it's getting like you know yourself better; you know your choices and limitations." "The most important thing to me is probably a selfish thing to say, but I have come to the conclusion is self-determination. It is awful, I have paid a price for it, but also, like that's very important ... to make my own decisions and not bend too much, try to be what I am and not bend to please some other people."

Sirkka had reflected on the importance of her sibling position in the family, "I was very free to grow. I mean, when my sister was born, she was the first child; she was very important. We were two girls and then my brother was born and in a country farm house it was very important to have a boy. I think I've always understood that I wasn't so much important."

Sirkka had also thought about how her abilities affected her efficacy. "It is very important for all people but especially for those whose job gets more demanding to grow as a person." "You have to go inside yourself -- what you are, what you want to be, what you support and it is important to understand, for instance, that you can't accuse your environment. You have to take responsibility yourself." "You need some kind of spiritual growth or mental growth and this is not only for women, it's also for men."

Helena had thought about why she became an orchestra manager; "It is most of all my will to work within a symphony orchestra surrounding. To go very deep into this subject, it might be that I wasn't really good enough as a musician." "I was never good enough to be in the front row, so I would have stayed there at the back. And maybe that's not my type. So maybe I just wanted to have some power. Managing the orchestra I really do have the power."

Responsible, independent, and self-confident.

Traits of responsibility, independence, and confidence were combined with self-awareness and a high ability level. Early responsibility was emphasized by Kerttu, Sirpa, Sirkka, and Maija. Demands placed on them as children made them responsible and independent. Kerttu was the oldest of six children, who did the family shopping. Sirpa had to help out in the home and at the cottage in the summer. Because of early responsibility, these women had the self-confidence in their own abilities to handle more responsibility.

Sirkka was the child in her family who was sent on errands and chores. "What I remember is that I was always the one who was supposed to speak if we had to go to the neighbour's to borrow something. I was very often the one who was supposed to take care of things. So in a way I learned to take responsibility, to be active, maybe more than my sister and my brother." "Then I was responsible for the vegetable garden. That was something I was responsible for very early."

Maija, too, took responsibility and learned to be independent early in life. "Of course, it was important, too, that I was very much responsible -- responsibility over our youngest children because I was 14 when the twins were born. My mother was very busy and I should help her very much the first summer and also later. Then I have got self trust also to take care of the kids. It has been very helpful for me when I have got my own kids."

Sirkka believes that women need to dare to take responsibility in the workplace. Women need to want the top positions. "The main thing is that if you really want to take responsibility. Women are very good in manipulating positively people." "They get very good experience for leaders, but they are afraid of the responsibility." "They are able to take care of family business, they are able to take care of company, but they are afraid; they don't always have that self-confidence and they are very sensitive to face criticism. And that's why I return back to that; you get that at home. You get that self-confidence -- you don't get it at school or in the offices any more, you get it at home."

Perseverance and courage in overcoming difficulties.

Many of these top achievers in Finland had difficulties they had to overcome. These hardships were overcome by perseverance, determination, and courage. Irma was widowed when her son was only a preschooler. Some of the women talked about early defeats and how they did not achieve some of their early goals. Paula, Kaari, Irma and Helena expressed regret about not becoming what they had started out to achieve. Irma and Helena felt sometimes that they did not have enough talent when they were younger. Paula's narrative was all about continually striving, always challenging herself.

Finland's history is one of perseverance, having been under the rule of the Swedes and the Russians. The second world war took tremendous toll on Finland. Riitta was the middle child in a family of three girls born to a Finnish electrician and his wife during wartime. When she was a very young child, the family had to move because the area where they lived, Jääski, was given to Russia by the Peace Pact. They lost everything.

Some of the participants described problems they needed to solve in their career positions. Raija's career has been at the University of Turku in the Department of Virology. "I came here in 1972 as a student still. At that time it was not common at all that students, especially females, from natural science faculty would come to make research at a medical faculty." "At the beginning I had certain types of difficulties compared to other scientists here with medical education." "Then I got important support from one of my female colleagues; she's a medical doctor. I remember always that comment when she told at a meeting that it was not fair for me that I do not get any help if all the others will get it and the only difference was that I am biochemist and they are all medical doctors. At the beginning, I had to fight a little bit because of my rights here."

In response to a question about which things helped her get to her present position, Raija emphasized the attitudes that she learned in her childhood home. "My personal opinion is that the first thing is my background that I got from my parents' home, that positive attitude to life and that all problems are for resolving, that I should go through them.... I should trust myself."

Kaari describes her own courage. She also acknowledges that the support of her readers contributes to the continuation of her writing. "It's hard work. I am not afraid, I think that's very important with people. And I found out to my great amazement that most people are afraid all the time." "Of everything. Other people, what they say, what is said about them, how they are treated, and everything. I thought it is strange that I am not afraid. Well, it's somehow it's different. I still see it. All around me people are afraid. Maybe there is something missing in my head. I have no social fear. Can one say so? I have my readers behind me. It was not so easy when I gave out this Daughters of Eve, the story of European women. It was not so easy even in Finland, on the contrary. The worst was other women, not men." "I don't have to be afraid of anything because I have this great mass of women with me all the time."

Despite opposition by the dean at the university, Paula went to study in China. It took a lot of determination, organization, and courage. Paula's determination is illustrated by her words: "If you really have a strong feeling you should do something, you really should do it. It's never so hard, you know, like my dean, he said I can't even get into China because it is so hard, and it was not hard at all! If there's a will, there's a way -- that's a good saying. I really think that."

Elisabeth's story was filled with difficulties as well as victories and it was a story of overcoming adversity. She spoke of the strength and courage needed to get through the troubles they have endured together as a family. "But that means that I have gone through so much. Our company was in economic difficulties and we lost everything 17 years ago, everything that we owned and started to build up again. I was already then in the Parliament. And then this, with the illness, I believe that that is something that is making you both humble and strong, that you have gone through a lot. Those who are just living like a flower with no difficulties, they can't make it."

II. Superior Performance

Most of these women recognized that the quality of their work was what differentiated them from other women and men in their field. Some of them had created unique positions for themselves. Others had extended experience in the field or had worked their way up through the bureaucracy. Nearly all of them spoke about how hard they worked to keep ahead of the

competition. Some of them referred to the quality of their product whose excellence was in demand by their audience. Others mentioned how their supervisors praised their work. More importantly, they talked about how much they loved their work.

Creating their own position.

All three of the research scientists interviewed had studied in North America and were able to bring that international experience to the field. Raija and Sirpa talked about how they had a different background than others in medical research. Kirsti worked for a large corporation involved in nutritional research. The three of them spoke about their ability to create their own visibility by the quality of their work.

Sirpa learned to work and take responsibility early in life. After her post-graduate work in the United States she was able to create her own research group. Recently, she was nominated as a member of Academics Finland and as a professor of Immunology. She referred to the level of effectiveness of her research group; "We have been productive and this brings all these positions and money to the work."

Raija has worked hard to become recognized in virology. "I try to do my work so well. I am equal to my colleagues. Nowadays it is quite well accepted that I am here as some kind of small boss." The quality of her work has helped the University of Turku maintain a topnotch reputation in the field of virus research.

Kirsti stressed the importance of having a good reputation in the field, "It is really important to meet the right people and of course at the right time." "Someone knows you and how you work and which things you appreciate and how you would like to be with other people. It's important so I think it's something very Finnish that you don't want to say you are good."

Experience in the field.

Most of these women had long careers with only short interruptions for maternity or educational leaves. With interest in the field often beginning in childhood or adolescence, they usually had extended experience in their field. Looking back over the careers of these

participants, there had been a series of successes and promotions as their reputations and recognition level grew.

Kirsti's interest in nature began in childhood when her brothers took her on walks in the woods. Love of nature inspired her to join a science club and this matured into a career in biology. Irma's early experiences included watching her parents create furniture and items for their household usage. Kaari's childhood experiences growing up as the much loved daughter of a publisher propelled her to a career of writing. She studied history at the university and used her knowledge, her background experience combined with her love of books and reading, to create some of the best-selling books in Europe.

Maija describes her career development as a progression of accomplishments beginning in high school when she was elected the chairperson of the coalition of students. "And for example, I have gone through all the steps, I would say." "When I became a student I began to study in the Turku University in 1967 and I went to student policy and I started there in the board of the student union." Student politics were only the beginning of a career in municipal affairs and national politics. Her earlier work experiences were with the City of Turku where she served as the Planning Secretary of the Health Centre and also of the Planning Department. In 1985 she became the Social Director of the City of Turku. "I was responsible for all the social sector in Turku town and I had about 3500 persons under me."

Her accomplishments have meant that she was often a trailblazer for women. "I was the first female chairman in the Committee of Child Care, the first female chairperson of that Committee of Social Affairs. I was the first female chairperson of the regional organization of my party and the first female chairperson of the regional development organization and the first female social director in Turku."

Kerttu's career evolved from her experiences during her summer employment. "During those years I had worked all my summers in the forest, doing different measurements, or investigations or whatever. At this point in time I would have decided that I wanted to study forestry." "It was very common in those days, a lot of girls and boys went to work in the forests. I

think I was one of the few ones that stayed. Girls, especially, they wanted to go to something like touring or children or something like that."

Working hard.

Sirkka, Raija, Sirpa, Kirsti and Paula talked about the importance of diligence at their jobs in order to be successful. They described themselves as hard workers who were focused, dedicated and responsible.

Raija is the oldest of two children born to a policeman and a housewife. She has one brother three years younger. In a discussion of her childhood she talked about the economic hardships in Finland after the war and the attitudes held at the time; "the general atmosphere in Finland was that we have to work very hard."

Kirsti is a dedicated worker, very involved in her work. "Yes, because nowadays to work in industry it's really hard, if you want to really put yourself on something. And I'm a person who wants to devote something and really go very deep, because then I enjoy working when I can really, really devote myself to something."

Paula describes herself as a hard worker who is able to spend long hours on her work and focus wholeheartedly. "Someone recommended me to the Board and said okay, this is a hard-working woman because that's what I have always been -- I've been working very hard here. As my daughter was an exchange student last year in the States I was very happy. I was, you know, working as executive director for the first year. I wrote to her that I was happy she was there and I could really work with all my heart." In response to a question about her success, Paula mentions hard work, determination, luck, and the support of others. "I think the major factor is working very hard. I think that is the most important thing. I wouldn't be here if I wouldn't have worked hard."

Quality of product.

There are many difficulties associated with making a living in the arts, yet three of these women have been able to make a living either writing books, designing fabrics, or working with orchestras. They delivered a superior product and that is what set them apart from their competition.

Kaari's career as an author began when she deliberately set out to write a best-selling book. As she explains, "I got my BA in 1967 and after that I should have started at the university to do some scientific research work but it was impossible because ... like all stupid girls, I got married! My first husband was an officer in the army and we lived in a garrison, far away ... in the middle of the great forests and there was nothing there, nothing at all. But we were very, very poor and I thought I had to make some money. There was no possibility to work outside home, nothing at all, it was just endless forest around. Of course, being a publisher's daughter I decided to write a book, a best-seller book."

Her first success led to several other successful publications. Kaari's books have now sold more than 1.8 million copies. "First I put my Finnish history in use and I wrote a novel about it and it became a best seller. Then I put my European history thesis on the same handling and it became a best seller."

Irma, too, has been successful due to the quality of her work. She stated, "You have to have good things and then people believe you and then they ask you to do something." Her work involves repetition and meticulous attention in order to maintain her reputation. She spoke about doing everything twice and not making mistakes. "Mostly it's so that you should do these things twice because always you make mistakes." Starting with only the drawings by the architect she takes time to try different things in order to be happy with the results.

The major public buildings in Helsinki exhibit her work. Some of the furniture upholsteries and wall-hangings in the House of Parliament were designed and woven by Irma. Her latest project involves making beautiful and acoustically functional wall-hangings for one of the old churches. Once her reputation was made she has had continual work. "We have so many architectures and that's why perhaps it helps. Because I was doing the textiles for the parliament and then for the residence of the president, I have found it easy to get works."

Love of their work.

These women were all passionate about their work. They held positions of responsibility and power or were independent entrepreneurs. Their enthusiasm for their work and their

dedication to it were revealed through their words, behaviours, and readiness to discuss it with me. Despite criticisms and occasional failures, they enjoyed the challenge of taking the responsibility and making the decisions.

As an artist, Irma prefers to work independently: "I love to be here at home and working on my own." She has been able to support herself and her son on her contracts. Some of the best known Finnish companies like Marimekko and Aarikka have used her designs. She really enjoys designing for public places; "I prefer much more to work for the public places than to make these kinds of contract work and also I appreciate as much to make a good upholstery as to make a piece of art because it is very difficult."

Kirsti's work involves the development of new applications for a by-product of sugar refining. She enjoys her work and appreciates the value it could have for all living things, "I like to be involved in this kind of application when you can really find something very good to help people, for yourself or animals. You don't have to think the business all the time, but you have also something more than just money ... innovations."

Riitta's idealism and enthusiasm are magnetic. "I spoke as Minister very much about passion, of passion of quality. It must be passion for quality in everything; that's my motto. Quality of life has been that one I have made my politics, and my political work. And people have supported that idea. They are those people who understand me. I really think there are enough such people who understand or if there are not I really would not be here." When she talks about her speaking engagements, her enthusiasm is evident in her manner and her words; "I really love this work."

Elisabeth gained international fame when she became the world's first female Minister of Defense. She explains some of the reaction; "All generals were a little bit disturbed. Women's organizations said again one woman went directly in the trap built up by men; will militarize women, and so on." She also recounted how she coped with the criticism; "I studied very much and I tried my best to learn and I took an approach that people counted for me -- conscripts, those who were serving in the army, also civilians, women without any prospects for having a post, and

so on. So this human approach was something they liked and then I went quite popular." At the end of her narratives she concluded, "It has been a good time."

Helena enjoys being in charge of the musicians. "I plan everything and then work with the musicians and like very much to work with them and talk everyday with conductors, and soloists - my kind of people. So it's really interesting work."

III. Interdependence

An obvious theme that emanated from the narratives of the participants was their confluence with others. Their words often showed strong identification with the group, whether it was their family, their audience, their constituents, or their team of coworkers. This theme, which I called interdependence, included not only the support they received from others, but their own willingness to assist, encourage, and support other people.

Support from Others

Relationships and connections with others, including family members and coworkers, was uppermost in the life stories of these women. Parents, siblings, spouses, professors, and friends had encouraged these gifted girls to develop their careers and assisted them with realizing their potential capabilities into actual talent areas and achievements.

Encouragement from family.

Support from the family of origin was usually in the form of encouragement for career development. Financial support was provided by some parents, but educational opportunities were largely state-supported.

Riitta's father played an important role in her childhood and her friends are supportive in her political life. She talked about how influential her parents were in her life. "And also my father, he really gave us all support and honored us girls, everybody. We are very different and we have long distances in age also, so everybody was the only one. It really was that we all had support and also our father helped us in everything." "But my mother, especially my mother, she really said it that there is not such a door that women cannot go through as well."

Paula was the only child of a middle class family. Despite having no siblings she had the feelings of being in a large family because of a close relationship with her extended family. She always felt that she was loved. "My parents, they are really nice, I've always had a really happy and nice relationship with them; I still do. They always have supported me in whatever I do. I think that is the basic background that I have, you know, the feeling of security that I've always had." Paula was treated as special by her grandfather. "I remember how my grandfather, my father's father, he was quite strict raising his own children, but I was the oldest grandchild and at the time the only grandchild, so I was always given special attention. You know, I was sitting in his lap and he gave me some pocket money that he didn't give to his own children. I was kind of the baby in the family. I wasn't, really, considering the age of my aunts. One was younger than I. I always felt that I have been something special though I wasn't really. I always felt that because my family and relatives take care of me, everybody takes care of me. I was and still am very much loved."

Paula also experienced high expectations from those who were important to her. "I always felt that I had been treated as the smart one in the family and I wasn't really." "It was sometimes not so nice because you know, I also knew that that would restrict my behavior too, when I knew that they were expecting so much." "On the other hand, it was also good because, as I said, I always felt like I was something special. I had the feeling and I think that it is very important to have the feeling."

In response to a question about what factors helped her attain her current position, Elisabeth responded: "I think we are all creations of the backgrounds that we have. I should pay very much credit to my mother and father, and, of course, also thanks to them, the good relationship I have got with all my family with everything I have done." "Mother was a very strong woman. She was at home and that was popular then, that a doctor's wife should be at home and took care of us and so, but she was very strong as a person. She also made us understand how important it is to follow what was happening in the world. From the very childhood we started to fight to see who would be the first one to read the newspapers."

Raija's parents were always supportive of education, "Even though I am coming from a middle class family, I did not feel that money for education is a problem. I could always trust that if I would have problems there would always be help from my family even if they did not have much money. I did not need any help but again psychologically it has been very important, I am thinking. And I would like to pass this same feeling on to my sons that they can trust their parents."

Role models.

Kirsti talked about the role her brothers have played in her love of nature and how her husband and mother supported her educational and career decisions. Sirkka was encouraged by her mother and she was accompanied by her older sister to school. Maija's grandmother and Kaari's aunts were positive female role models and sources of encouragement. Paula's grandfather made her feel special.

In response to a question about what contributed to her position today, Kaari answered: "I think that my self-confidence is due to strong feminine relatives so I learned something. Even from a child in school I never thought that there would be someone who didn't like me. Of course I loved to be liked. Everyone likes to be liked. I just didn't notice if there was someone who didn't like me. But I think it's because I learned to trust myself because I had these very good adult women friends, my aunts."

Irma attributed her interest in her talent area to her parents: "They were very handy both." "My father made all our furniture." "When he was welding, he made all the kettles for us and I still have them, some of them, but not the furniture any more."

One of the most influential persons in Maija's childhood was her grandmother. "I can also mention my grandmother because I was the favorite grandchild of hers. I was very much with her. She had a very big house about seven kilometers from my home and it was more sophisticated and more beautiful and more comfortable. She always took care of me -- good meals. I loved to go there."

Maija's grandmother was a strong role model of competence and independence. She told her grandmother's story. Her grandmother was someone who had lived a special life because

she had married a Swedish-Finn and moved to Canada. After living in Canada for some years, her grandmother had returned with a Canadian-born daughter to Finland. "It was a great mystery, first of all, why my grandma and my mother came back to Finland." Her grandmother took over the management of a large farm and all the people working on it. "She came back and she stayed and stayed and stayed, and her husband said finally, that either you stay or come back, but if you stay, then it is finished."

Husband's assistance.

In their own families these women were given a lot of help by their husbands. Helena, Sirpa, and Riitta all praised their husbands as being helpful in childrearing and in household tasks. Helena's husband helped with the cooking. Kirsti's husband and Raija's husbands accompanied them while they were doing graduate work in Canada.

Raija is married to a teacher and they have two sons, both of whom were born during her research program. She gave credit to the support and assistance provided by her husband. "During my marriage, of course, the help from my husband, the support of my husband -- it is very important that he never wanted to push me to stay at home. For instance, he was also starting to continue his studies. We had discussed already the possibility to make his PhD and so on, but when I was near to finishing my PhD and we had two children, it was his own decision to quit his own studies and he took care about our family. And I guess that one reason is that also somehow he has taught me that I don't take all daily things so seriously, that if I don't have time to clean at our home, for instance. My husband is always cooking, except for the weekends when I do it as I like it. But somehow, he never criticizes me that I don't do the things at home. I have had always his support; for instance, in those most busy times when I was finishing my PhD and we had small children, he never told me stop it now and be more at home and take care of our babies and this is one very important thing."

Teamwork.

Coworkers and educators also provided valuable assistance and encouragement. Sirpa, Raija and Kirsti named their educational supervisors as facilitators by having faith in them. Paula

credited her boss and the board for their trust in her abilities. Sirpa, Raija, and Maija attributed their present success to the support of coworkers. Kerttu's teacher was her mentor. The demands of their audience were significant influences in the careers of the three women in the arts.

In response to a question about what contributed to her current level of success, Kirsti attributed it to the encouragement from people in her personal life and her university professors. "I have been very lucky because I have always had very good supervisors at the university. So that they have really thought what would be best for me, also as a person but also as a scientist. They have really tried to help me so I feel very good, especially at the university, but also in my personal life, there has been some encouraging people in my life." Her husband and her mother both encouraged her to follow her dream.

Despite the uncertainties in the art world, Irma has been able to thrive. When I asked her about her success she referred to the teamwork that results when she works with good architects. "I think when you have been working with architects it's a teamwork and we have given to each other so much. In doing a piece of textile art for public places the architect has made the walls and things; you get so many good ideas from them to start with."

Supporting Others

Now that these women have positions of influence and power, they recognize their own responsibility to assist others in improving their quality of life or in developing superior work. Means of supporting other people include assisting them in the workplace, motivating others, taking on more responsibility, and working in the war-torn areas of the world. The nurturing aspects of these women came through as well in the importance they placed on being a mother, the treatment of their staff, and in their hospitality for us.

Assisting, motivating, and serving others.

With the support of others and given the opportunity for higher education, Kerttu feels empowered to achieve to her potential personally and to assist others to achieve as well. "And

nowadays I already believe that I can do a lot of things. It's a good time and this is why, because I have been given so much, that I really would like to take on the new role of helping others."

Riitta spoke about how many friends she has and how she is able to motivate those who follow her. "And then those people support me. So it's very important because we give power to each other, people to me and I to people, so I suppose. That's the point. They always ask me wherever. I have so good friends; they are very good manipulators. That's the point. I have so much to do. Because so I cannot say no enough even though I say no eighty percent."

In response to a question about factors leading up to her success, Maija pointed out the support of others plus her own willingness to serve, as a second reason. "Yes, more people who supported me because I haven't planned my career. It has come. There have always been the situation where someone has asked me, 'Can you be candidate for that or that or that?' There are two. Of course this is a process to be a candidate to the city council. Of course, I have said yes. I am a candidate, I have been many times a candidate before, I have been elected. Then somebody has asked me to be a chairman of that and I have said yes, yes, yes, yes. Yes, I can say that this was my own proposition because I should leave the city council and the committees because I have been elected to the Social Director. And, of course, I have decided to be vice-chairman to the National Coalition Party. I was candidate. There was over ten candidates, three were elected and, of course, it was my own ability."

Elisabeth witnessed her father, who was a doctor, devote his time and energy to patients after the war. "In the evening and the night my father always went to the different parts of the village and just took care of those patients that were too ill to come to his office. Then I learned that people were not really having justice, equality in their conditions. How sad it is to look at those very poor families in everything that they were lacking and that was especially bad after the war, and somehow, social care was born in me."

In speaking about her present work with the United Nations in the war-torn areas of what used to be Yugoslavia: "What I am doing now is the best part of my life. It's the worst in that sense that I have never been believing that I should experience anything like that: to be with

mass graves that have been emptied from stinking bodies; looking at the sadness of mothers who are looking for their sons (I'm not looking for my sons); to be with the raped women, to go through all their experiences so that they can have someone to talk to; and go through all this and to try to be strong with chiefs of police and mayors who have been mishandling Muslims; to deaths and the arrests; to be with death-sentenced prisoners." "One week a month I am spending there and the whole time I am feeling that I am getting rewards, not Nobel Prizes, but small rewards from ordinary people, holding hands, crying together with the old woman who has lost everything in her life, showing empathy, doing so to her cheeks. They need me; and also unifying the families, releasing political prisoners, who have been perhaps for years in prison without any trial. Then you feel good."

Sirkka has organized a group of women from various fields who meet regularly, go to the sauna together, and discuss important informative topics. "What I mean by women should support each other, then I'm thinking more about this kind of networking. I didn't get very much support, that kind of support in the very beginning of my working life." "Networking is important, in Finland; especially, the men have their old boys' clubs. They go hunting and fishing and they have their sauna clubs and everything like that. Of course, men made fun about our sauna club, that we are copying what they are doing." "There were different stories in different papers that this was some kind of secret club of women who are taking the power in the society. The truth is that the club has given us more self-confidence, understanding and wider perspective in many ways."

Sirkka believes that things will improve in business for women. "I'm quite sure we will get more and more women in offices in top positions. Now when young women are playing football and ice hockey, they learn teamwork. They learn how to work together. Because that's one of the problems we have seen that it's not very easy for women to be part in a bigger group and to take the criticism you always get." "I have to be able to face it myself and I have to be able to face the criticism which I get from outside. I have also to learn to take criticism when I know I did the

right thing." "We women are too sensitive and it has very much to do with education, how they are taught at home, 'Come away -- don't start quarrels. Boys quarrel. You can come away.'"

Being a good mother.

All of the women interviewed except one are mothers. Being a good mother was referred to by all eleven of the mothers. Irma brought her son up alone after the death of her husband about 14 years ago. Sirkka talked about the importance of caring for her children and she helps with baby-sitting her grandchildren now. Raija's husband took on the role of child caregiver while she was involved in her studies and Riitta's husband looked after their son when she was away from home due to her duties in parliament. Kirsti is currently balancing the needs of their newborn son with the work of her research team. Sirpa said she always felt that she wanted to be a real mother to her three children.

It was in connection with children that some of the most important statements were made with regard to services for women available in Finland. Maternity leave is available for eleven months for everyone, but a mother has the option of staying home with the baby for up to three years. A child care allowance is available. Day care is provided for all children in Finland at government expense. Another service is pointed out by Maija; "In Europe it is quite usual that women can make only part-time jobs, work only part-time, because they must go home to prepare food for those children who are coming home from school to eat and then go back to school. We have all meals free of charge at schools."

Some of the services such as day care are recent additions and were not available when Maija's children were babies. "I had a child born in '74 and then the next summer I have gone to work. But then the basic services that women need to work -- there was not day care, kindergartens then. It was only for the poorest people or people with lowest incomes. I should have a private nurse in my house. I have organized different combinations. I first knocked at my neighbour's' door and asked people I knew who needed also a nurse and we combined this nurse. And then I have different combinations all the time when my children have been little."

In the early years of her marriage Elisabeth stayed home and looked after her young family. "I really was more the supporter to my husband. He was the important one. He was very much involved in football; he was the president of the Football Association of Finland and so on, so I was the one who was in the background -- the good wife, but active, of course, through school and home corporation. I was, of course, naturally with all those children; it was easy to take the position."

Riitta is the mother of one son who is now a medical student. She credits her husband with raising their son. "He has done very well and I feel this is because my husband has taken care of the whole school time." "He was in all of those parents' meetings and so on, and certainly it was good there was even one man, in a way, because the mothers very often take care of those, right? But it is important that both are there." To get things done, she and her husband had to cooperate and encourage each other. "The problem is real, that we must divide the work at home and outside. It's only positive. You can arrange very many... my husband always says it's only arrangements. We can do that. And always if I say that isn't possible at the time, he says that you do not dare any more. That's the most, best possible attitude. It is encouraging, really. Even now when we have been together since 1960, it is the same."

Sirkka made certain that her children were well cared for: "When my children were very young, I had a very low salary but I paid all that I got for someone to take care of children. So it was, in a way, an investment for future, because I knew I wanted to have my job, I wanted to study, and I wanted to have someone who I could trust to take care of children."

IV. Egalitarianism

Throughout the interview data there was a strong emphasis on the basic equality which is inherent in Finnish society, an atmosphere in which everyone is treated fairly. Equality is not only an attitude; it is a tradition. Women have shared equally with their men in the agricultural fields, the war fields, and in the workplace. This atmosphere of equality did not just refer to gender equality, but also to equality of all people, regardless of income or social group.

In the Finnish language there are no pronouns to differentiate between the sexes. Equality is a value that is instilled in the home and pervades the educational system. Girls and boys are treated equally in the home. The overall purpose of education is to produce a situation in which all children are enabled to work to their capacity. All Finnish children are educated in the public school system where equality is one of the guiding principles. Private schools exist only for foreigners.

Maija pointed out the importance of equality; "But of course it was a very social society. There are no class differences." "I have grown up in quite, not wealthy, but not with a lack of money... but I think that the best attitude I have got from my home is that every person is equal, despite of their origin, their incomes, their status and so on." She also indicated that entry to higher education is available to all income groups because education is free or nearly free.

Equality as a tradition.

The Finnish tradition of working together began in agriculture and was continued during the wartimes when women helped out in the front as well as in the houses and in the grain fields. The tradition of equality was mentioned by Maija, Sirpa, Kirsti, Riitta, and Kaari. They referred to the history of Finland, the agricultural influence on career development, and the stereotype of the Finnish woman. In response to a question about the factors in Finnish society that facilitate career success among women, Riitta replied, "Tradition is the first, the most important thing."

Finland was pioneered by young couples who moved into the northern areas and cleared the land. Kaari described their situation; "They were very lonely and often the wife and the husband were the only adult people that they saw for years. The husband was normally the midwife, for instance, because there was nobody else but them, the couple and the children. They worked together as everything had to be done together because there was nobody else, no servants or anything, only those two and they had to respect each other because they knew if one died the other would very soon and the children, too." "It's a Finnish tradition that women hunted with men which is quite exceptional, which is thought to be in the last millennium and even in this millennium to be quite barbaric. But in a way it's -- let us all work together."

Women's work has always been valued. Maija stated, "I think that our agricultural background is the other reason because women and men have worked very hard their little farms together. It was very traditional sharing their jobs." Maija stressed how Finnish tradition has an impact on politics. "When we are thinking of women in politics, you maybe know that women in Finland had the first in the whole world the right to vote and to be candidates in parliamentary election. We celebrated the 90th anniversary last year."

Kaari has written extensively about European women; "I have often thought about it and I think there are some things in history also which contribute to the good position of the northern women. Altogether, the Swedes are quite well established, Swedish women, also the Norwegians, and the Danes too. Part of it is we are all Lutheran countries -- we all have old written laws. The old laws gave very good economical positions for women. The husband had no right to the woman's estate." "In northern countries, people, I mean the peasants and the normal people, have never been slaves. You know there was serfdom in Europe, peasants were slaves, but not in Nordic countries. Always free persons."

Kerttu, Riitta and Kaari all emphasized that the female stereotypical image is of a strong person. This characteristic of strength applied to all Finns and is the theme of many pieces of literature. Kerttu stressed that Finland has a tradition of strong women. "I think the women here are really, really strong and sometimes I think they are too strong. Of course there are problems with equalities, but in my own opinion, you can go anywhere ... if you set your mind to it you can go and men don't dare put you down."

In describing life in Finland, Riitta said, "I thought how much harder it is to work here. It demands, and it costs much more. And that's the point that we've really got so very tough and strong. We really are strong. Finnish people are strong. I said that we do not get anything for free. We must do everything three times. We have three times glasses in windows, we have three types of clothes: winter, summer and between, and we have fought three times for our independence. We have done everything the hard way, but we really have, because of that,

power. We are strong. And also the women, because we need the women. Finnish women are really strong."

The experience of equality in the home.

Commitment to fairness and equality began in the experiences of childhood. These women experienced equity in the home. The parents encouraged the girls as much as the boys to have a career. Education was promoted for girls and opportunities for higher education were provided to them as well as to their brothers.

Kaari is the eldest child and only daughter of a publisher and a journalist. "I remember clearly with two brothers that I never felt any way lesser than the brothers. In a way my father expected me quite eagerly because his marriage with my mother was the second marriage and there were no children in his first marriage and he was all of 38 years old and he very much wanted to have a child. When I was born, I was a kind of princess."

Sirkka emphasized the importance of the home in a child's development. "You get your main strengths or ideas in the home. And that's why I think also that equality should start in the home. If you have very different roles, men's role and women's role at home, you never get rid of them." "I am from a farmhouse where it was clear that everybody worked together." "Even if children were small, you were taken to the fields and to the cows, and everywhere."

Education was always deemed important for Finnish women. Riitta was trained as a teacher and she pointed out the importance of career development for women today. "Nowadays it is, for example, there are so very many divorces. The woman must have own work always. Education -- own work. It was most important. We put the money in our home to that. In those days it was not free. Nowadays everything is free."

Parents usually valued career development for girls as well as for boys. Sirpa and Sirkka talked about their mothers wanting them to have careers. Sirpa and her sister grew up in a small city in the middle of Finland where their father worked in the wood industry and their mother was a secretary. Referring to her mother's attitude about the importance of women having a career, Sirpa said, "She always taught us that women are as good as men and women cannot be

dependent on men. You always have to have a good education and nobody, no man can come and give orders to you. That was her main message to us really."

Sirkka's mother provided a role model for the girls and helped them get their basic education. "My mother was a very good example. She was both working outside of the home and taking care of the tasks of the farmhouse -- taking care of the cows, and taking care of preparing meals, and taking care of children, and then she had her job, so she really worked hard."

Sirkka's mother paid for her education and insisted that her daughters be independent. "I learned at home that there is no difference between men and women. My mother taught the idea that you can do whatever you want, it's just up to you, yourself." "She had a belief that especially girls, they had to have education and they shouldn't get married before they had a career. She was very, very determined about that. She paid our studies because in the country, in the farmhouse, it was seen that there was no need to educate children, but she saw that it is very important. We both, my sister and me, we got our basic professional education; she paid all that."

Equality in marriage.

The tradition of working together in the home continues today. In contemporary Finland, men and women work together to raise their children and maintain their homes. The participants in this study talked about the level of assistance they receive from their husbands in the homes.

Equality in marriage is expected. For these women the task of child-rearing was shared with their spouse. Child-rearing is not only the responsibility of the mothers. Household duties were also shared. Sirkka stated that Finnish women are independent even if they are married. Sirpa referred to a different marriage style in Finland than Americans have.

Helena talked about her home life, "I have a son who is 13 years already and is very independent, who goes to school and takes care of himself very much. My husband cooks. I do less cooking, only when I have the will to do it. We don't have that big of an apartment that I

mainly clean it myself, but we can have someone to help also. So, doing these family things, we are also very equal." "I must say that family affairs don't take too much of my time."

Equality in the workplace.

The respect Raija has at home continues in the workplace. "And maybe one important thing is that I have very equal status in my own family and I expect similar behavior here at the work. I can't understand that I don't have a similar rightness here. I am a specialist. I am a senior scientist. Of course I have the same right compared to my male colleagues."

Helena spoke about equality in her field, "I think the musical field, in general, has always been very equal. We have had, of course, especially, opera singers as a field for younger students. And I think in many other fields in Finland, also in musical life, women have worked very much together with men already from the beginning. This society is not that male-oriented. Women are not only working at homes. It is sort of quite natural that women come to study also music, not during the 19th but already quite early in the 20th century."

Equality in education.

Riitta emphasized the importance of education in the facilitation of career success among women. "And nowadays the most important thing which explains this success is education. Education is really the same for boys and girls. I mean really the school education system, and so on and also research and the universities and everything."

In response to a question about the factors that she believes contributed to her own level of success, Kerttu pointed out the support of others and access to higher education. "I would say the system here. They have wanted the whole nation to participate in the building of this nation." I come from a very modest home." "It would have been more difficult if my parents would have had to contribute. I should have stopped somewhere. Everybody was given the opportunities; it was only up to you."

Access to university is not restricted by financial concerns. "When I started in '78 it didn't practically cost anything to study at university. The tuition, if there was a tuition it was just nominal, just a few hundred marks. We had to buy books; we had to, of course, live somewhere

and buy food; but we could get state-guaranteed student loans. So we got this loan plus we got a little bit of scholarship a month that we didn't have to pay back and some people even got extra money for living expenses. I never got that." "When I started, it was only 20 years ago, it was so equal. Anybody who had the head could get in, and once then you got in, you could get the loan."

Accessibility to higher education was also a facilitative factor for Kirsti. "My mother was a housewife and my father was a bus driver." "They were also very encouraging to go as far as I could, because in Finland it has been quite cheap to study. So there was no problem with the money. I could take a student loan from the bank and it was no problem, so they didn't try to say that you shouldn't do that."

The Equality Law.

There are less obvious divisions in the Finnish society between socioeconomic groups and gender than in many western societies, yet equality issues are so important for the Finns that they are written into the legal system. The Equality Act underlines the reconciliation of working life and family life for both women and men. It is illegal to treat people without fairness. Violation of the act prescribes compensations from between 15000 to 50000 Finn *markka*. This approximate range would be from $4000 to $14000 (Canadian) in today's economy.

The Equality Act was reviewed in 1995. The new amendments at that time included the quota provision for public organizations and new demands on employers to promote equality. If there are 30 or more employees the employer must have an annual personnel and training plan to ensure equality between men and women. If a discrimination is suspected the employee representative has independent right of access to information on the wages and employment relationship of employees. Sexual harassment was included in one of the amendments. The employer has a duty to try to ensure that an employee is not subjected to sexual harassment.

Maintaining equality.

Maintaining equality was a concern expressed by many participants. As women in positions of leadership, they recognized their responsibility to see that fairness and equity prevailed for

both men and women. Some of them were worried about girls being more successful than boys in certain aspects of education. Some of the women expressed concern about the men working in their field of expertise realizing that men must not feel that they are being discriminated against either.

Maija pointed out the high level of education among the females. "In most faculties, girls are the majority and that is already becoming a problem. For example, in schools, there are less and less men and we have been discussing on the last years should young men have a quota in those faculties. Also we are talking about girls and boys growing in kindergartens where there are just women."

Helena spoke about gender equality in music schools, "We have a very high quality music education system in Finland." "And already when they start music education it's 75% girls and 25% males. And now already we see in the Sibelius Institute, it's the same figure. And every time we have auditions for positions in orchestras, it's more often a woman who is taken for the post. So this will change and I'm concerned about that. I'm afraid that in 20 or 30 years we will have majority of women, and I would say that is not a healthy direction. I would keep it in half and half, but I'm not sure that we can manage that."

Kerttu also expressed concern for men; "Listening to women nowadays -- women tend to be more verbal than men so they can really analyze everything to death and sometimes I am saying, 'Give the men a break.' They have many good capabilities. They are not like us. They are not like what we would want them to be. Let them be like they are. We complement each other." "We have to let them be what they are, that's what is exciting. Men are men; women are women."

The Equality Law stipulates that all public preparing committees must have at least 40% female participation. In referring to that part of the Equality Law, Riitta said, "I think it had been better that we had gone further with the natural method." "There are very many men who are, for example, voting for me and who vote for women quite on purpose because men want a new kind of decision-making. And women are different. We both are needed. I think God in heaven has made 50/50 about these quotas and I think this must be so. It happens all so naturally." "In all

such places where we worked, elections for parliament, elections for municipal councils, and so city councils there are no such quotas and no risks. We have quite personal elections, and there we women have succeeded very well."

Girls have consistently been getting better grades in Finland partly because they have shown high ability to learn many languages. With her teaching experience and subsequent public service as the Minister of Education, Riitta understands the status and needs of the educational field. "Nowadays Finnish girls are very well prepared to do whatever." "But I think as I have been Minister of Education that I really have wanted to change this thing, but it hasn't helped yet, to make the school system such that it doesn't make boys unsuccessful." Riitta taught school for many years before entering the political field. As a teacher she realized how important it was for both boys and girls to obtain good grades. She expressed concern that the internet could start a new gender gap between boys and girls in schools. Boys were now more adept with the computers. "We must give to all knowledges as much worth, so that it is as valuable to have a mathematical and a biological and so on such knowledge than also humanistic knowledges."

Discussion of the Results in Terms of Available Literature

There are few references to the achievement of exceptional women in feminist literature. Women have different ways of knowing (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986); their voices must be heard (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). This study is unique in that it has allowed the voices of twelve exceptional Finnish women to explain their experiences of achievement, success, and eminence.

Those who have studied female development in the United States of America point out the importance of relationships and connection to women (Gilligan, 1982). Girls and women tend to silence themselves in order to be accepted as feminine and popular (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). Achievement has not been valued for women by either men or women. The consequence of being competent for women is often that they are judged to be less feminine and less well-

adjusted (Lott, 1992). The result of these forms of discrimination is that gifted women continue to be underachievers (Reis & Callahan, 1989).

Career development for women has been described as being more complex than it is in men (Fleming & Hollinger, 1994; Ginzberg, 1966). The literature that is available on talent realization and career development for females often does not differentiate between women from different cultural backgrounds. For the most part generalizations are made that are based on a preconception that women universally experience the same problems. Literature on career development for women is limited not only because the topic has not been researched extensively, but also because women have been excluded and marginalized from advancement in the workplace. Lott (1992) pointed out that women's competencies are usually devalued. As well, explanations of female success are usually externally based using justifications such as luck or easiness of task; whereas success in males is usually attributed to high ability.

These Finnish women did not downplay the difficulties of their tasks or allude to good fortune as part of their success stories. These participants attributed their success to their own personal qualities and their superior performance as shown by the two most salient themes of self-reliance and superior performance. Instead, it was through hard work, internal fortitude and their own abilities that they were able to succeed, despite many difficulties in their lives.

A model presented by Gagné (1990) differentiates between giftedness and talent. Giftedness is the potential for talent development; talent is developed in a variety of fields of endeavour. Giftedness through learning, training, and practice is mediated by intrapersonal factors such as motivation and personality as well as environmental catalysts including significant factors such as other persons, places, interventions, events and chance.

In general, the results of this study fit into the model described by Gagné. However, the eminent women emphasized some of the factors more than others. Education and job training were provided for by the government and available equally to all those with intellectual ability. These factors were seldom talked about in detail. Personal qualities were foremost for the Finnish participants. Although the women in this study talked about their level of motivation in

terms of initiative, interests, and persistence, their tone was stronger and more demanding. They talked about trusting themselves, overcoming problems, and having the courage to take responsibility. Environmental factors such as places, interventions, events, and chance were seldom referred to as being important in their career development. Other people were the most important external factors in their fulfillment of their career aspirations.

Much research has been undertaken about the various barriers to success experienced by girls and women. In a longitudinal study called Project CHOICE, Hollinger and Fleming (1993) found that adolescent gifted and talented girls did not recognize the existence of external barriers in the pursuit of their aspirations. In subsequent follow-up, though, the same individuals did report encountering gender-specific external barriers. Even though they saw few barriers to achievement at first, fifteen years later they reported many external barriers from family members, sexism, and the complexities of juggling a career and family responsibilities. The conclusion was that perceiving oneself as being agentic or instrumental rather than expressive contributes to self-esteem, to the achievement of individual goals, as well as to increased satisfaction with oneself.

The participants in this study recognized the importance of their personal qualities in the culmination of their success. They saw themselves as agentic, capable, active people, which according to Hollinger and Fleming is an important part of the personality development of girls able to realize their potential. In Finland, however, there is the expectation that a woman will successfully balance the needs of her family with those of a career. Finnish girls have not had to make a choice between marriage and career. Other people assist with the care of the children, including husbands and grandparents. Housekeeping tasks are shared by both parents and are not the responsibility of the woman alone. Even the state takes responsibility. Good quality child care is available to all Finnish children at minimal costs to the parents. Meals are supplied at the day care centres and in the schools.

In the past few years some early interest in the study of eminent American women has been shown. Available scholarship on giftedness and eminence in females has been recently

synthesized and augmented by Arnold, Noble, and Subotnik (1996). According to these authors, women realize their potential in three spheres of influence: eminence, leadership, or self-actualization. They proposed a model of female talent realization in women in terms of foundations, filters, and spheres of influence. Foundational factors include components in society that serve to marginalize women from the centers of achievement as well as individual factors such as family background, personality characteristics, and resilience. These demographic characteristics are filtered by opportunities and the nature of the particular talent domain at the time.

In Finland, the distance of women from the mainstream is not as great due to two societal aspects: the emphasis on equality, and the homogeneity of ethnic, religious, and language backgrounds. Family background factors are also not as great an issue when all students have equal opportunity for advanced education and travel abroad. Resilience and personality factors remain salient for this sample, but the other factors mentioned by Arnold et al. (1996) were not emphasized by the eminent women in this study.

Women with high ability who have become eminent have been described as having particular commonalities by Kerr (1985), who studied the lives of her own classmates as well as some eminent American women. One of the commonalities shared by the highest achievers was their experience of separateness which Kerr called the ability to avoid confluence with others. The seven eminent women she studied all spent much time alone, a factor related to their common experience of feeling different or special. As children, they were voracious readers and often received some type of specialized education. Many of them experienced a difficult adolescence, having to take responsibility early. These factors were related to the development of what Kerr termed "thorns" or "shells" that served to protect or insulate the self from the feelings of others. In a follow-up book, Kerr (1994) provided some advice for the guidance and counselling of gifted girls based on the experiences of her classmates and the eminent women she had studied. Realizing that women do not always value achievement, Kerr asked if self-actualization was optional. Even though gifted women choose to underachieve, they are not

necessarily unhappy. One of the problems she pinpointed was that smart women do not always want to fulfill their potential.

The Finnish women did not display the commonalities demonstrated by the participants in the Kerr study. They did not have special education, nor did they talk about being alone and isolated. Instead of feeling different and disconnected from others, the emergent theme of interdependence accentuated their feelings of connection to others. In general the Finnish women showed no evidence of having thorns or shells. They were very congenial people who wanted to honestly answer my research question, but who were anxious not to be associated with radical feminism. They certainly did not demonstrate the ability to avoid confluence. One of the most surprising things about the interviews was their obvious sympathy towards the typical Finnish man. Family issues came up in every interview. These women had chosen to fulfill their potential and the significant others in their lives had supported their decision.

Most of the available literature on talent realization in women is recent and has supplied only limited amounts of detail. A study of the reflections of older women on eminence (Reis, 1995) emphasizes that experiences in early life provide the preparation for later achievement. She presented a model of talent realization in women which includes four emerging factors: above average ability and special talents, personality traits, environmental factors, and the perceived importance of talent manifestation. These factors merge into a woman's belief in herself and a desire to develop her talent.

Reis's model of talent realization in women emphasizes the personality traits of determination, motivation, creativity, patience and risk taking. That description of personality traits is close to what the theme of self-reliance in this study stands for, although there is no emphasis on personal courage. Being strong is part of the Finnish traditional female stereotype. Personal courage and fortitude is highly valued by both men and women as it is displayed in all people. Literature on the Finnish war response glorifies their ability to continue to fight for their country despite severe difficulties.

There was no indication by the Finnish subjects that a desire to develop their individual talents was required. The lack of reference to developing such a desire before achievement can take place is indicative of different cultural values. Career development is not considered to be optional for women in Finland. All girls and boys know that their talents are needed in order for the country to thrive in the modern economy. The focus of the Finnish respondents was in the development of enough courage to take responsibility in the workplace. Self-actualization may be optional in North America, but not so in Finland, where the emphasis is placed less on the individual and more on the benefits to the whole country.

Not all cultures have the same attitudes towards success and career development in women. The onus on the Finnish government is the development of the potential of each and every citizen by equalizing differences between social classes, regions, and the sexes. Efforts are made to provide a high level of education and to facilitate uninterrupted full-time work for women. These underlying conditions combined with a tradition of equality mean that career development for women is different than it is in many other countries of the world.

Literature written about women must be very careful about the generalizations made, particularly those that refer to achievement, career development, and talent realization in women. Women from other cultures do not demonstrate all the same commonalities as those in North America. Stereotypes, discrimination, and attitudes are not the same in the Nordic countries. Training, opportunities, financial backing and recognition are necessary for women, in addition to ability, in order for them to attain career greatness (Nochlin, 1971). Finland tries to supply these necessary conditions so that women can successfully combine career and family responsibilities.

Reflections on the Process and Recommendations for Future Research

In this study there was good fit between the paradigm and the research question. Taking a phenomenological point of view allowed for the methodology to change and emerge as opportunities opened up and as the data dictated. This was a cultural study in the sense described by Bogdan and Biklen (1992), in that the interaction of social structure with human

agency was examined, and the results described a combination of factors from society and the individual.

Ethical issues caused some concern when most of the interviewees wanted their own names to be used. As I wondered why they were not worried about confidentiality, I realized that these women are, for the most part, accustomed to publicity and the public's interest in their stories. Part of it is also the degree of high confidence they have in themselves. They were all, each in their own way, totally committed to their goal. They felt confident about their stands and about what they believed, and felt no caution about open expression of these opinions and feelings. The positive nature of the subject has something to contribute as well. Facilitation of success was the aim of the questions rather than focussing on the barriers and problems associated with advancement.

Much more research into factors that contribute to career success is necessary. The study of women from another culture has demonstrated the complexity of the problem and illustrated how little we really know about female talent development. Certainly, societal attitudes and services for women had a very important impact on the lives of these women; however the crucial elements for success remain individual traits and talents.

Conclusion

During the telling of their narratives, twelve eminent women reflected on their childhood, education, and early career experiences; and this contemplation produced new understandings of the meaning of career development for females with high potential. Literature available for parents and teachers of gifted girls has been enriched and augmented by this study of the experiences of Finnish women. The universal themes that emerged from their narratives provide new insight into the development of those essential personal characteristics that are associated with being an eminent woman in the 1990s.

Finnish literature and family histories are replete with stories of strong, capable women who were highly successful. The traditions and values of the Finnish society allowed for equal education of girls and the opportunity for early experience in their chosen career field. These

values and opportunities were transferred via people in the women's lives, including those in their families of origin, their present families, and the colleagues at work and school.

Self-reliance in the form of independently pursuing their own dream, persevering despite difficulties, and fulfilling their own potential was the universal theme of the narratives told by the women interviewed in this study. The emphasis on their personal characteristics supports and complements the literature on gifted women. The participants saw themselves as capable and competent people. They trusted their own judgment, knew their own strengths and weaknesses, and were courageous enough to assume a high degree of responsibility.

Whether in the world of art, politics, scientific research, or business, these women excelled in their influence on and leadership to others. Relationships were very important to these women. The emphasis on their closeness to family members, the support of their coworkers, and their empathy with Finnish men substantiates the significance of relationships to these eminent women. The theme of interdependence affirms the emphasis in feminist literature on the connectedness of women to others.

These women attributed their success to the society and to the home they grew up in as well as the support of their educators and coworkers. In exchange for their personal success they felt a responsibility to assist others in their society to achieve their own potentials. The participants appreciated the traditions that allowed them to receive an equal education, their parents for their encouragement in career development, their husbands for sharing in the household duties and childrearing tasks, and their coworkers for their generative teamwork. Most of all, the interdependence of these women is demonstrated by their active support and assistance of others with fewer resources and status: Sirkka's sauna club for her peers, Elisabeth's work in Bosnia, Riitta's need to motivate others, Helena's concern about female domination in the music field, Kerttu's support of others in Forestry, and Kirsti's involvement with the United Nations. Irma, Helena, and Kaari will continue to respond to the demands of their audiences.

Analysis of their narratives revealed that these women believe that they became eminent because they were self-confident and brave enough to produce a superior quality of work. This product-oriented view of success is the usual one described in achievement-oriented literature, but their stories also reveal a distinct emphasis on the role of others in their success and their feelings of responsibility for others. The overall mood through all the narrative data was one of synergy with individuals helping each other rather than competing with each other. It would seem that the traditional view of success and achievement has converged with more feminine virtues such as caring for others and appreciating the role of others in the climb to personal success. The usual product-oriented definition of success is combined with both support *from* others and provision of support *for* others. To some extent, success has been redefined by these eminent Finnish women.

This study has contributed to our understanding of how women experience eminence. These enthusiastic women seemed to enjoy the constant challenge faced in shouldering such extremely responsible positions. They all enjoyed high status within their communities and within society as a whole. The twelve women were capable of looking back over their lives and objectively describing their victories and their defeats, their opportunities and their problems. All of them expressed optimism not only for the prospects of Finnish women, but for the opportunities available for women throughout the world in the near future.

With the aid of my participants, I have tried to interpret the narratives of successful women in light of the factors that helped them become prominent in Finland. The voices of these eminent women provide insight into our understanding of talent development and the meaning of success from a female point of view. Recommendations for parents and educators can be gleaned from the findings of this study. The implication is that optimizing the chances for girls to reach their potential means motivating them to be productive and self-reliant without undermining their compulsion to be interdependent with others. Relationships are an integral part of the success these women achieved and connections with others continue to be a part of their role as leaders in the community. Success for women in Finland is not an individual triumph.

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Chapter 5 Summary and Discussion

Women have rarely been acknowledged as eminent in any society over the ages and famous female leaders are still uncommon today. As a result, there have been few studies of eminent women anywhere in the world. This project was intended to alleviate that gap in the literature by investigating a research question pertaining to the identification of factors that link exceptional potential in girls to eminence in women. It was based on the premise that a study of the backgrounds of successful women would provide information valuable in the education and counselling of gifted girls. The results were expected to further our understanding of how gifted girls balance facilitators and barriers in their society during the development of career paths consistent with their high potential.

The focus of this project was on identifying those factors that facilitated achievement and personal success for contemporary eminent women from two cultures: Canada and Finland. Because there are multiple perspectives on the research question, it was investigated using the approaches and methodologies of two paradigms. The retrospective perceptions of eminent women were explored in two studies: a quantitative one based on the results of an extensive survey and a qualitative study involving the interviewing of twelve women in Finland. Throughout the project, the researcher endeavoured to find harmony and coherence, despite the complexity of the issues involved.

After the results of the survey and the interviews were analyzed independently, as reported in the preceding chapters, they were combined in the ongoing search for the factors that facilitate high achievement in women. In this chapter, the two studies are described and their independent results are summarized. In addition, the results are combined and synthesized. Implications for parents and teachers of gifted girls are presented for consideration along with ideas for future research.

Societal Differences Affecting the Status of Women

Important societal differences need to be explained before the conclusions to this study are presented. Canada has a policy of multiculturalism; thus, Canadian society is much more heterogeneous than Finnish society. The traditional roles of women in the two countries are not equivalent. The present status of women in Canada and Finland reflects these differences as well as the current conditions in each society that affect their health, education, employment, and economic position.

Finnish women have a long history of working alongside the men, whether they were raising agricultural crops, hunting and fishing, or defending their country together. They have successfully combined having careers and children for generations. There is a tradition of being a working wife and mother rather than working only in the home. The absence of the traditional breadwinning role for men alone has prevented the development of a strong patriarchy.

In Finland there is a perceived need for all citizens to have a career. Even though this need may be driven by the state of the economy, it has served the status of women well. The qualifications of female wage-earners are higher than those of men and the female unemployment rate has usually been lower than that for men. Finnish women are highly educated. In many faculties there are more female students than male students. Men and women often work in different professions: men produce, handle and transport equipment; women serve, take care of, and educate people. Men and women usually work in different sectors with women working in the public sector and men in the private sector (Korvajärvi, 1998).

Finland is a young welfare state. The extension of social services is seen as a remedy to assist women. Public health care is delivered to everyone everywhere in Finland. Preventative health services, counselling and information are given free of charge. Finnish women receive social security benefits as individuals, not as spouses, and separate taxation

is the practice. There is a national pension system for all no matter what their employment status or pension contributions.

Finnish society strives to enable women to combine career and family successfully. Public support for women with children includes universal child day care, child home care allowance, maintenance allowance, child benefit, housing allowance, and home help services. There are many services in place to assist women to have successful careers while they are raising children. Job security is part of the package that assists women to combine motherhood with their career. Maternity leave is flexible, prolonged and available to all women. Prolonged maternity leave does not interfere with the employment contract. Maternity leave is currently 11 months, but mothers can stay at home until the child is 3 years old, in which case they are given a home care allowance. In 1978, Finland became the first country in the world to give fathers a separate leave of 6 to 12 days at the birth of a child.

In Finland, equality is guaranteed by law. The Equality Act underlines the reconciliation of working life and family life for both women and men, making it illegal to treat people without fairness. Violation of the act prescribes monetary compensations to the victims. When the Equality Act was reviewed in 1995, new amendments included a quota provision for public organizations, and new demands on employers to promote equality.

Over the decades, Canadian women in general have held little property or wealth in their own names. Traditionally, they have served in the workforce for brief employment periods, typically prior to marriage or in times of economic need such as during World War II. Until recently, married Canadian women were usually homemakers.

All Canadians are guaranteed equal protection and equal benefit of the law in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. A universal and comprehensive health insurance program is in effect throughout Canada, although there are some regional differences in services implemented by the provincial governments. Most services available for women have been relatively recent innovations in Canada. Since 1985, women have been legally entitled to maternity leave from their employers. Day care services have become common

throughout Canada, but they are usually privately-run businesses paid for by parents using the services, and sometimes subsidized by the government.

The status of women in Canada has been improving over the last two decades. Since the 1970s, women have been increasingly enrolling in post-secondary education in all fields of study, and the number of women with careers has risen dramatically. The proportions of women serving as managers, parliamentary members, or corporate executives are increasing. The female-to-male earnings ratio has been rising over the past fifteen years. In 1995, women who worked full-time earned about 71 cents on average for every dollar earned by their male counterparts, compared to 64 cents in 1980 (Statistics Canada, 1998).

There have been advances in legal protection, the availability of services, and more equitable pay, for women in both Canada and Finland. Despite these advances, women in both countries do not enjoy opportunities for career advancement equal to their male counterparts. Recent economic situations in both countries have produced further difficulties for women trying to juggle the responsibilities of jobs and families.

Summarizing the Two Studies

Quantitative Study Reported in Chapter 3

In the quantitative study, 1107 contemporary eminent women responded to a survey about the contribution or detraction various factors made to their career aspirations. Of the respondents, 827 were Canadians and 280 were Finnish. Five questions about the facilitators and barriers to their career development were analyzed. In the first question, the participants were asked to rate what part was played in their lives by twenty-seven factors related to personal characteristics, family members, school and work personnel, conditions at educational institutions and in the workplace. The second question asked the women to list three people who encouraged them in pursuit of their career goals. The third question asked them to provide three barriers they faced in their career development. The persistence of these barriers was the focus of the fourth question. The final question listed education, personality, hard work, help or

support from others, superior ability, and luck, and asked participants to rank order these large categories of factors.

Results for the Canadian and Finnish samples were analyzed separately and then compared. Many of the variables presented in the first question were most commonly reported by both sample sets as being irrelevant, neither contributing to nor deterring, their career development. These irrelevant variables were those emanating from greater society, such as the proximity of locations and flexibility of schedules, the availability of services and funding, and the stereotypical attitudes of others.

As they looked back over their careers to answer the first survey question, the participants from both countries reported that their own personal qualities and convictions were the primary reasons they were able to achieve as much as they did. Approximately 98% of the Canadian and 94% of the Finnish respondents reported that their own personal convictions facilitated or greatly facilitated the fulfillment of their career aspirations. In addition, over 97% of Canadians and nearly 96% of Finnish respondents felt that their own personal qualities facilitated or greatly facilitated their career development. These results of Question 1 were consistent with those from Question 5, in which the participants from both nations ranked "Personality" first as the main factor in their attribution of success.

Participants also gave considerable credit to the encouragement and support of significant others in their lives, especially their spouses. In the second question, the Canadian respondents reported that spousal support was augmented by the support of their parents. Professors and spouses were named as the most encouraging people by the Finnish participants. These results suggest that a woman's personal characteristics and her relationships with others are the crucial elements in career development.

Women from both Canada and Finland reported that the stereotypical attitudes of others was the variable that most negatively affected them in the pursuit of their career aspirations. Being female was presented as deterring career development for the Canadian sample more than for the Finnish women. While the same facilitators and barriers were reported in both

cultures, the intensity of their impact varied among the sample sets. Of the 27 variables listed in Question 1, six had significant differences at the .001 level of significance among the means for the two sample sets. The respondents from Canada reported that colleagues, and success in high school were more facilitative than did those from Finland. The Finnish respondents rated the availability of funds/scholarships, family connections, the availability of child care, and flexibility of time schedules at school as more facilitative than the Canadians did. Factor analysis was used to confirm that there were substantial differences between the two sets of responses for the first question.

Fewer Finnish respondents reported barriers than Canadians did in Question 3. About 73% of Finns and 87% of Canadians named one or more barriers. General attitudes of discrimination constituted the category of response most often reported by Canadians. The Finns who reported barriers most often named other people as deterring them from their career goals. More Canadians than Finns answered Question 4 in the affirmative, indicating that the barriers they reported continue to affect their goal attainment.

In Question 5, the main categories of factors were to be ranked in order of contribution from the most to least facilitative. The average Canadian response showed the following order: personality, hard work, education, superior ability, support of others, and luck. On average, the Finnish respondents ranked them: personality, hard work, superior ability, education, support of others, and luck. Both sample sets agreed that their own personality and hard work were the two factors to which they most attributed their level of success. Despite the similarity of the ranking, t-tests showed that the means for the two samples were significantly different for education, superior ability, and luck. The Canadians reported all of these three categories to be less facilitative than the Finnish respondents did.

Narrative Analysis Reported in Chapter 4

In the qualitative portion of the study, twelve eminent women living in Finland provided their life stories, focussing on the factors that they believed made the largest contributions to their career success. The participants worked in fields varying from the arts to research science, and

from government to business. They were a design artist, an author, a musician, research scientists, business women, and members of parliament. Some of the positions they held were the Secretary-General of a political party, the Governor of the Bank of Finland, the Speaker of the House of Parliament, and a United Nations Commissioner of Human Rights.

Thematic analysis of their narratives produced themes of self-reliance, superior performance, interdependence and egalitarianism. Self-reliance emanated from categories of response referring to high ability, leadership skills, self-awareness, responsibility, independence, self-confidence, persevering and being courageous in overcoming difficulties. A theme of superior performance resulted from the categories of working hard, producing a quality product, and loving their work. Interdependence signified the importance of relationships in their home lives and in the workplace. Support and encouragement by others and strong role models were the ways in which others helped them. Being a good mother and being willing to motivate, assist, or serve others were the ways in which these women supported and helped others. A basic attitude of egalitarianism seemed to underlie all the other themes because of Finland's tradition of equality as well as legislation regarding equality in the workplace. These women experienced equality within their childhood homes, marriages, workplaces, and educational system. Many of the participants expressed a concern for the maintenance of equality in their field of expertise, especially if girls were being more successful than the boys.

These interviews provided richer information related to the Finnish women than the survey items did. Contributions to our understanding were made on how women experience eminence. The Finns interviewed were passionate about their work and optimistic about the opportunities available for women. The participants saw themselves as capable and active people who were leaders in the community. Concern for others and for upholding fairness and equality in the home, school, and workplace were expressed. Success to these women went beyond being self-confident and brave enough to produce superior work; it also meant appreciating others, caring for others, and being willing to serve others while striving to maintain equality.

Aggregating the Results of the Two Studies

The quantitative study served to identify the most salient contributing factors as well as the barriers that affect the career development of gifted girls and women. The thematic analysis of the interviews not only confirmed the findings from the survey questions; it also extended them by providing more detail. In many ways, the results of the quantitative portion and the qualitative part were similar. In general, the findings from the two methodologies validated each other in a triangulation of the results.

The variables that received the most responses as being facilitative in the survey were the same ones that showed themselves in the narratives and the answers the Finnish women provided to the direct question about what helped them succeed. Personal qualities and people who assisted the participants to become successful appear as highly facilitative in both studies. In the interviews, the participants identified and described the personal qualities and the actual ways in which their family members helped them. In the last question of the survey, personality and hard work were ranked by both Canadians and Finns higher than education, high ability, the support of others, and the aspect of luck. In the thematic analysis, self-reliance and superior performance are the themes with the most categories. The significance of receiving help from others as well as the importance of supporting others appeared in the interview data.

The quantitative study indicated that there were many similarities in the career development of women in Finland and Canada; however, there were also important differences. A combination of the tradition of working women and the number of females in high positions in Finland mean that statements about women there are not always applicable in Canada. Even though cultural differences are recognized, an aggregation of the findings from the two studies provided strong evidence for several recommendations for educating girls. Comparing the reported facilitators of success in women from these two countries resulted in establishing the importance of individual characteristics and support networks relative to other conditions and circumstances. Women experience eminence and their own career success in conjunction with strong feelings of connection with other people.

The Importance of Personality Aspects

The responses to both studies revealed the importance of women understanding their own strengths and using these abilities as a foundation for career building. The women who responded to the questionnaire expressed how their own personal convictions and qualities had been important in the realization of their goals. The narrative study augmented our understanding of these aspects of the personality. Self-reliance was the label chosen for the universal theme that referred to self-awareness and having the fortitude and confidence to take on roles of responsibility and leadership.

The self-actualizing women who participated in these studies learned to rely on their own abilities and qualities, and to trust their own competencies and judgments. They were not afraid to take on the responsibility that must accompany successful creative activity and leadership roles. Strong women were often mentioned as being family members or other role models. Experiencing success early in life may be conducive to success in adulthood. Some of the confidence these eminent women had in their own decision-making ability may be attributed to their successful high school and post-secondary educations.

Education for self-reliance means education for personal independence, yet that is not the entire message from the findings. These women were secure in their career positions, but they are not separated from their families, friends and coworkers.

The Importance of Interpersonal Relationships

As the participants in this project described their talent development, it became evident that they did not sacrifice their personal relationships for career success. Support and encouragement from others and especially from family members were basic to career development of women, whether they were from Canada or Finland. Colleagues, professors and employers were also reported to have provided assistance for the respondents from both countries. Teamwork in the workplace was another common category mentioned by the eminent women who provided their life stories.

In the survey, fewer eminent Canadian women reported having children. The average number of children per Canadian respondent was less than the Finnish average. Even though the Canadians were younger than the Finnish participants, it would seem that they do not as readily combine families and careers. Eleven of the twelve Finnish interviewees had children of their own and each of them stressed the importance of being a good mother. Finnish society has not only made it possible to combine family with career, but the expectation is that women will do this with ease. Career development is not as problematic for women in Finland as it is in countries where there is no tradition of working mothers and, thus, a lack of role models for girls.

Another important finding from the studies pinpoints how crucial the encouragement and assistance of their spouse is for the achievement of married women. An implication of this finding may be that marriage partners require reeducation on the changing roles of women in modern society. The Finnish husbands helped with the household chores and with child rearing and all members of the families benefited from this cooperation. As one of the participants pointed out in her interview, marriages can only be strengthened when stronger individuals are involved in that relationship.

Implications and Recommendations for Talent Development

The conclusions produced by the findings have implications for those involved in raising, teaching, or counselling gifted girls. Self-reliance must be promoted within the young women, and their achievements must be supported and valued by those closest to them. Girls should feel that they are capable of taking on the responsibility needed for successful career development; meanwhile, mutually supportive relationships with others must be maintained. Services within educational settings and workplaces are needed to assist women in combining their family responsibilities with their career ambitions.

Developing Self-Reliance in Girls

The socialization process for girls with promising abilities and talents must be reevaluated. Self-reliance must be promoted in all aspects of a girl's life by encouraging

individual responsibility and independence. Leadership skills need to be developed. Opportunities for experiencing success must be provided. Childhood success is the antecedent of adult success and the avenue by which achievement becomes part of the self-concept. The happiness that is derived from personal accomplishment and excellence of work must be experienced before career success becomes a discernible goal for adulthood.

Adolescent girls tend to negate their own experience and silence themselves in order to be accepted by others (Brown & Gilligan, 1982). Girls who are taught to be passive, accepting, and nurturing may not be able to develop their individual talents or to take the risks necessary to be noticed in their work. They may not display the characteristics associated with self-reliance, including self-awareness, self-confidence, responsibility, perseverance, and courage in overcoming difficulties, that were exhibited by the interviewees in this project.

Taking responsibility.

The development of those personal qualities conducive to building self-reliance means that girls must be socialized to accept responsibility. Girls should be rewarded for being capable, efficient, and reliable. Taking responsibility early in life has been reported by eminent Canadian women in another study (Yewchuk & Schlosser, 1996) and in the narrative study in this research project. The implication for parents and teachers is that girls need to develop those qualities associated with being responsible, such as trustworthiness and accountability. Women cannot distinguish themselves from their peers unless they are willing to engage in high levels of responsibility required in leadership or management positions.

Providing role models.

The interviewees in the narrative study talked about the strength and courage of their mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and female colleagues and how interacting with these women affected their own prospects. An implication from this study is that girls need strong

female competence after which to model their career development. Reis & Dobyns (1991) cited an absence of role models and advisors as barriers to gifted girls on their way to self-actualization.

Many of the qualities associated with femininity in America are suggestive of passivity and dependence (Bem & Bem, 1976), and not of the self-reliance shown in this project to be a requirement for fulfilling one's potential. In Canada and the United States there is no tradition of mothers working outside the home, and so there is a lack of role models for girls on how to combine career and family. On the other hand, Finnish literature and family histories are replete with stories of strong, capable women who were highly successful.

Researchers, writers, and educators are encouraged to provide more material about women who have been successful. Women who display self-reliance need to be given higher status by providing positive promotion of their activities and behaviors. There are now more female leaders in politics, business, research, and the arts; their life stories need to be heard by young girls.

Providing appropriate education.

The longitudinal studies of Fleming and Hollinger (1994) on assisting gifted and talented young women in appropriate career planning, demonstrate the need for enhanced intervention strategies. Education departments recognize the guidance and counselling needs of gifted girls, yet these are not being met. Classroom teachers require educational preparation in order to advise girls of career possibilities appropriate to their ability level that would provide them with a satisfying lifestyle.

Post-secondary education was not common for Canadian women until fairly recently. Young women often are not acquainted with women of prominence in the field in which their interests lie. Affiliation with such women would provide girls with a clearer understanding of career options and job descriptions. Mentoring with successful women is a promising suggestion for filling some of the void left by a general lack of role models for gifted girls in Canada.

Education is a publicly funded endeavour in Finland. Students are accepted by the universities by meeting the academic standards; they do not have to pay high tuition fees. If student loans are needed for their personal expenses, they are automatically approved at low interest rates.

In Canada, post-secondary education also depends on an individual's grades, but full-time enrollment in university can become very expensive. Large student loans are quickly accrued by students in programs that require many years of schooling. Policy-makers, educators, and employers must be aware of the pressures on young women who want to have careers as well as a family. Some women have had to choose between having a family and getting the education that would allow them to pursue their dreams and use their abilities. Studying for several years after high school and then working for many more years in order to pay off student loans may not be a happy prospect for many girls with high ability, but who lack financial resources. In recent years, fee hikes for post-secondary education, combined with high unemployment rates among young people, have put stress on female students already burdened with family responsibilities. Support for education among gifted women is not enough if services for child care are neglected. Universities and colleges need to supply adequate child care facilities on campuses. Flexibility in scheduling whether in a post-secondary institution or on the job allow women to study, work and care for their families without having to neglect anything or anyone.

Providing Support Networks

The support of other people.

This research project has shown that talented girls need the guidance and encouragement of their families of origin to become highly educated and build a working reputation for themselves. In order to successfully manage a household, raise children, and maintain a high profile career, these women need the assistance of their present families. In the workplace, a better product results if coworkers cooperate and teamwork dominates rather than competition.

The label "interdependence" chosen for one of the themes in the narrative study highlights the ambiguity and reciprocal nature of the relationships fostered by the participants. Women want to be connected with other people, but these relationships must be mutually facilitative. They do not want their role in these relationships to be a dependent one, yet they do not desire to be completely independent, either.

For family members of gifted girls, helpful suggestions arise that are directly related to career success. Success itself must be valued by those people in meaningful relationships with the girls. A girl should be rewarded for having the courage to state her own views rather than for being submissive to the views of others. Her abilities and achievements must be valued, not just her appearance, manners, and behaviour.

From these results, Canadians can learn how to make achievement more possible and more satisfying for women. In general, societal attitudinal change is necessary so that the achievements and competencies of women are not undervalued (Lott, 1992). Successful women will enjoy being successful more when others acknowledge and value their accomplishments. Workplaces would improve the situation of their female employees if more attention was paid to their relationship needs. Networking, such as that being tried in Helsinki among the female leaders, would be empowering for the younger female executives and managers.

Providing the services needed by working women.

Quality child care that is highly regarded by mothers and readily accessible is necessary for women who wish to combine a career with family. Government funding for services for working women has not been a priority in Canada. The current crisis in health care in Canada has had a negative effect on women, resulting in more of the sick and the elderly needing care in the home. In contrast, the breadth of the health services in Finland provide release for women from much of this home care.

The daycare centres run by Finnish governmental services provide care for infants and children up to seven years of age. Mothers in Finland need not worry about the quality of the

care or the nutrition of the meals provided at the centres that exist in every neighbourhood. The women, who trained or worked in the medical profession, spoke about bringing their children with them to work in the hospitals, where babysitting and food services were available around the clock.

Motherhood is an important experience for career women and society must make it more possible for women to feel that they are good mothers and good workers. An obvious solution is to provide quality daycare facilities in the buildings in which women work. Convenience for mothers results in less stress for all family members as well as more productivity on the job.

External factors such as differential socialization and societal pressures on women are important factors in the underachievement of females. Stereotyping delivers powerful messages to girls about their importance, roles, and worth as human beings. When we talk about stereotyping in the western world, we are usually referring to negative stereotypes. In Finland, because the traditions are different, the stereotypical woman is a strong, competent woman in control of her life. Fewer Finns report external barriers in the form of discriminatory attitudes to their career aspirations.

Uninterrupted full-time work, a high level of education, and unionization are often mentioned as the conditions for the emancipation of women in society. Finland has tried to meet all these conditions. Canada must look to the Nordic countries for guidance on how to improve conditions for highly capable females in order to promote talent development and fulfillment of potential, and to optimize self-actualization.

Contributions to the Literature

The literature that presents models of achievement for gifted women has been augmented by the findings of this study. The eminent women in this study saw themselves as confident, competent, and caring people. They were highly capable, talented leaders. The crucial factor in adult productivity has been established as personality disposition. Acquiring self-reliance was a crucial part of the personality development of these women who are able to realize their potential.

The literature available on female talent development has been furthered by the labelling and descriptions of the quality as self-reliance.

Piirto (1994) indicated the importance of personality attributes to adult recognition and lists the following attributes: judging, perception, imagination, self-discipline, leadership, passion, drive, feeling, resilience, androgyny, aggressiveness, intuition, self-efficacy, self-esteem, naiveté, thinking, creativity, compulsiveness, tolerance for ambiguity, and persistence. As inclusive as Piirto's list is, it fails to portray the courage and strength that the participants in this qualitative study emphasized.

Hard work, as originally pointed out by Roe (1983) and Cox (1983), is confirmed by the emphasis on work by the interviewees and the responses to the last question of the survey. The emphasis by these participants was not wholly on working hard, however, but also the quality of their work. Continuously accomplishing more than others or producing a superior product meant that these women were outstanding in their fields and became known for their exceptional performances. Creativity and uniqueness of product were part of the work produced by these participants and the aspects of that work that distinguished them from others in their field.

In the results of the surveys for both sample sets, other people, including parents and spouses, were reported as being highly facilitative. The mood of the interviews was one of the synergy of individuals helping each other, rather than competing with each other. Relationships are important to Finnish and Canadian women. The theme of interdependence is different from that of independence. These women did not focus on the fact that they were independent from spouses or families or even their coworkers. Instead they emphasized their connections with others. The emphasis of these participants on their relationships with others affirms that Gilligan (1982) is correct in her emphasis on the connectedness of women. The emphasis on other people is similar to the factor reported by Gaskill (1991) of providers of support and guidance. The theme of interdependence in this project is similar to the caring and collaboration themes found by Regan and Brooks (1995).

Instead of pointing out the benefits of sisterhood, the emphasis by these Finnish women was on the promotion of equality for all members of society, not just other women. They appreciated the help of others and recognized their responsibility to help all others develop individual talents. The interdependence theme with its emphasis on caring for others leads directly to discussion of the last theme, egalitarianism. All of the women interviewed spoke about the importance of equal opportunity among all children regardless of sex or region of the country in which they grew up. Finland has a tradition of promoting equality. The female role models who are admired by young girls and whose stories comprise the literature are strong women with *sisu*, i.e., perseverance.

Much of the literature about gifted women has focussed on identifying and providing interventions to the barriers that deter them from career achievement (Fleming & Hollinger, 1994). The available literature on barriers is augmented by the results of this project. Fewer Finns than Canadians reported barriers to their career aspirations. It would seem that Finland has successfully controlled some of the external barriers for women: the lack of role models, the difficulties of balancing home and family responsibility with those of their careers, the financial problems associated with obtaining the education needed for career choices. Practical solutions in the form of government services make it possible for Finnish women to study without incurring a large financial debt or work without worrying about the appropriateness of the child care facilities. Much national pride is taken in the status of women in Finland: successful women are highly regarded.

Limitations and Delimitations

Some of the limitations and suggestions for further research have been presented within the two individual studies. General limitations to the entire project are discussed in this section along with ways in which the limitations of the separate studies interact with each other.

In an attempt to derive knowledge about talent development in girls, the researcher has generalized from the narratives and behaviours of older eminent women. Generalizations

made about the findings must be considered in relation to the samples selected. In addition to those who took part in these studies, there are many more brilliant women in Canada and Finland who could supply helpful advice for parents and educators of gifted girls.

Retrospective studies are the only method possible in the study of a group such as eminent persons. In the quantitative paradigm, retrospective studies have been criticized because of their lack of control of the extraneous variables and the randomness of human memories. In contrast, retrospective study in a phenomenological approach to research is viewed as augmenting one's experiences and enhancing the meaning of the phenomenon being studied.

As with most questionnaires, the quantitative study generally restricted the responses to those factors listed in the questions. The variety of fields in which the women were prominent was largely overlooked. What was presented was a description of the typical eminent woman in the two cultures. In part, these limitations were met by adding the results of the qualitative study. In the narrative study, there were no restrictions on the factors nor was there any neglect of the variations of field. There was no attempt to ascertain the typical experience or to interview the typical eminent woman in any of the fields of endeavour.

Some of the limitations of the qualitative study were offset by the quantitative study. Criticism of the sample selection for interviewees is met by adding the information obtained by studying all the Finnish women listed in the Who's Who, as was done in the Finnish sample for the quantitative study. When the first study is combined with the second one, comparative data were available, not only for 280 Finnish eminent women, but also for 827 Canadians.

There were additional inherent limitations to this project in general. Becoming successful, famous, or eminent is the result of the complex interaction of discrete factors, a synergism of conditions, people, and experiences. Taking a single finding out of either of the studies and focussing on it would be misleading. It is recognized that a multiplicity of factors must work in concert to produce a favourable course necessary for high achievement

in women. Prior research has shown evidence that high achievers may be able to capitalize on whatever conditions exist in their environment and become outstanding in their field of endeavour (Schlosser & Yewchuk, 1998). Their adaptability is perhaps suggested by the participants in their emphasis on their own characteristics as being the main determinant of their success.

Eminence and success among gifted and talented females has been the topic of this research project. It is acknowledged that not all women desire high achievement levels. Completely autonomous choices must be promoted among all women. Women who choose traditional careers or full-time homemaking ought not to feel devalued by the recommendations of this study.

Suggestions for Further Research

Even though this project consisted of two studies, it is seen as only a preliminary investigation into the factors that foster eminence in women. Within this project the inherent limitations of each study suggest avenues for further research. The findings point to a need for extensive further study into how women of high ability cope with personal and societal barriers and how they can be assisted in the development of their talents.

The survey results could serve as a precursor to other studies that focus on the separate factors listed in the questions or in other topics that arose from the respondents' comments. Examples of topics that require investigation include the availability of role models and the methods used by successful women to overcome societal barriers. More study is needed about the role played by educators in career planning and family members in supporting the everyday responsibilities of home and work.

The narrative study should lead to further study of facilitators that apply in other countries. Women are distinguishing themselves in most countries today. Their stories have not been heard. Other women and girls need to hear more about these women who have become famous through their talents and their high level of achievement. The study of the narratives of Finnish

eminent women is only a beginning to hearing about the factors that serve girls and women well as they try to balance families and careers.

It is crucial that parents and educators better understand the development of the personal characteristics that are the primary factors in female achievement, as found in both studies. Cross-national studies have been established as not only beneficial to our understanding of societal barriers to women, but as essential to instigating societal change conducive to high achievement levels among the gifted and talented.

Conclusion

The results of these studies demonstrate the importance of personal characteristics and the supporting role of others as the deciding factors in female achievement. The usual product-oriented definition of success has been complemented with the guidance and encouragement of others, and with highly achieving women supporting and nurturing others. Women's achievement would be facilitated by changes in stereotypes, availability of funding and child care; however, the crucial factors remain mainly the personal and familial ones.

Participants in both studies emphasized aspects of their personality as the primary factors basic to their career development and consequent success. Relationships were an integral part of the success these women achieved, and connecting with others continues to be a part of their role as leaders in the community. Provision of role models and mentoring opportunities would serve the needs of gifted girls by developing self-reliance while in relationship to others. Optimizing the chances of self-actualization for females means motivating and assisting them to be productive and self-reliant without undermining their need to be connected to others.

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